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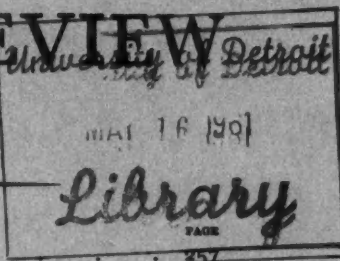
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NEW SERIES

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THE CLERGY REVIEW

MAY, 1961



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The CLERGY REVIEW

NEW SERIES VOL. XLVI No. 5 MAY 1961

YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY

SARTORIALLY speaking, it is no longer correct to refer to "Teddy boys" and "Teddy girls". The ludicrous and expensive elegance of their Edwardian uniform has now been discarded. The boys appear in the equally expensive and elaborate Italian style; while the girls, when they are being feminine, favour either balloon skirts (and look like blown roses) or a tight uniform (and look like badly rolled umbrellas). But it was as "Teddy boys" and "Teddy girls" that they earned their notoriety; and the name sticks, though today they would prefer to be known as "mods". The rest of the world, however, has remained "square".

In recent years we have heard too much of gangs of marauding young hooligans, striking terror into their elders and betters by personal and material violence; and we have heard too much of hordes of girls, screaming and swooning over the latest rock-'n'-roll idol. For a time there seemed to be a lull. This was partly because of the counter-measures taken by society, but partly because the national Press became interested in other matters. The violence remains more extensive and more serious than many realize, as a cursory reading of any provincial newspaper will reveal. Of late it seems to be on the increase, so much so as to be a grave concern to a depleted police force, helpless with insufficient sanctions, and so much so as to cost British Railways something like half a million pounds a year to repair wanton destruction.

The problem of modern youth is troubling the social conscience. Never before have young people attracted so much attention from their elders. They have even earned themselves an Albemarle Report. Mother England is behaving like a mother of delinquent children, who usually complains bitterly that her children should turn out so bad—the explanation is so obvious as to be beyond her comprehension. It is a natural tendency to blame the young people, but, in all honesty, who is to blame? Juvenile delinquents are usually good material badly

kneaded, their juvenile vices blown up to lifesize, and almost always with an unsettled domestic background. The blame for their unhappy situation has to be shared round a number of other people too.

It is only fair to not be misled by preconceived notions nor by newspaper denigration. Nor should one condemn all young people, just because many of them talk a language of their own, wear their hair long, wear an odd kind of uniform. There is many a lamb masquerading in wolf's clothing. Most of us squares do not like their music nor their dancing. Their music may be tuneless, but it is vigorous and has an attractive beat or off-beat. If they really like it, let them have it. Their rock-'n'-roll, if that is still the fashion, is far healthier than many a dance that has gone before, for there is the minimum of personal contact. But it is a violent and ungainly exercise which leaves its performers breathless and perspiring.

The youngsters of today beneath their camouflage are probably much the same as their parents were; but they are better clothed and better fed, physically superior, and, to all appearances, more mature. Appearances, however, are deceptive; beneath this self-assured maturity, the modern youth retains much of the vanity, greed, selfishness, cruelty, that marked him as an infant. Much of his eccentricity is due to his realizing that he does not measure up to the mature pose he affects. His self-assurance is only a cloak for his inward uncertainty. This is nothing new; in everybody's life there comes a time when the needs of the growing individual conflict with the restrictive customs of society. What is new today is the way in which the youngsters are able to flout the restrictive customs of the adult world and to usurp the rights of adults. They pretend, for instance, to a compulsive habit like smoking, because it is a mark of the maturity they have yet to attain; before they leave school, they are inveterate smokers. Moreover they resent and reject the adult world with its superiority of years and experience and create a world of their own, a plausible caricature of the world of reality, with its own code of behaviour and morals, its own uniform dress, its own pastimes, its own leaders.

It would be a gross injustice to class them all as juvenile delinquents or as criminals. But today there are far too many

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young criminals among them, far too large a lunatic fringe, bolder and more expressive than ever before. It is this lunatic fringe that has given a bad name to modern youth. It is so large as to cause thinking people serious misgivings. Modern youth may not be criminal, but it is among the gravest of modern social problems. Adolescents have always been a paradoxical problem; today's adolescents are just the same but rather worse.

Yet for all their insolent self-assurance, they are only immature youngsters, growing up and trying to find their feet in a world which is difficult enough for mature men and women. They have to solve the personal conflicts and uncertainties characteristic of their age in a world which is very unsure of its own future and without adequate values. Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow the hydrogen bomb or something even more awful may have destroyed civilization. For most people religion has long since ceased to have any validity, and lust and violence have been unleashed; morality has been savagely undermined by two world wars within living memory; marriage has become a mockery; the world is attuned to violence—savage violence was the business of their fathers a few years ago, violence is an everyday incident today, and violence enhances their amusement. In this country at least, prosperity has come rather too quickly for digestion and has brought problems of its own.

Never before have children and young people had so much money to burn. Even quite small children seem to have as much money as they want, so that they grow up accustomed to relying on money to purchase entertainment. Older generations grew up learning how to make their pleasures independently of money, of the Saturday penny. A child today without money is crippled. Once a youngster, having started work, used to hand over his wages to the family and used to get back only pocket-money for personal expenses and entertainment. Family economics made the child's contribution essential to balance the budget—the family was probably larger than the modern average family; father certainly was not earning so much (and was always in danger of unemployment); mother was probably not out at work all day. Today parents abdicate

economic control over their children. Young wage-earners get enough to be able to hand over a token sum to the family and still to have three or four pounds in their pockets each week. An active, young, unskilled labourer with overtime could easily find £15 or more to spend on himself each week.

This is why young people have been able to indulge their exotic taste in clothes. The older generation was severely restricted by lack of funds, but it did its best and achieved, for example, Oxford bags and plus-fours. Nowadays, lads can afford to spend £20 or £30 on their meticulously tailored Italian rig-outs, complete with all accessories—and if they cannot afford it all in one sum, there is always hire-purchase. Young labourers can afford to wear seven or eight clean shirts each week, not counting their working clothes—and many of them are almost foppish in their cleanliness. They can afford to buy expensive radiograms and vast collections of "pop" records, or very costly and very fast motor-cycles. Inevitably they can only buy their entertainment and amusement—dirt-track, cinema, pop-singers' records by the hour, dances, public houses, coffee-bars and so on. They save very little except for some immediate purpose, like a holiday or a new rig-out. Their large wages make early marriage possible; and for other reasons early marriages are sometimes necessary, though they are immature and by no means prepared for the responsibilities of marriage.

So their long pockets provide a new modern field for exploiters, and there are plenty of people who make it their business to extract money from gullible teenagers through papers, magazines and novelettes, fashions, cinema, induced crazes, television. Much of today's advertising is aimed directly at them. "Pop stars" are built up for this purpose—young men or girls of no outstanding gifts in appearance or talent; with no professional training but with an ability to put themselves across as typical youngsters who can make big money. It is difficult for the uninitiated to see any merit at all in their performances, but they manage to extract ecstatic devotion from hordes of youngsters who copy their clothes and appearance, avidly devour every "fact" of their lives and adventure, buy their records by the thousand, and swoon and scream in

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crowded halls over their performances—which not infrequently end in riots. They have an enormous capacity for this hero worship, as well as an intense loyalty to things and people they believe to be of their own kind. This may indicate a line of approach to their salvation and a method of reaching them: if people of their own kind, “teddy-boy apostles”, can give them a real Hero worth worshipping, they may find their salvation.

There has been a serious increase of criminal offences among young people in recent years—drink, violence, and sexual disorders. Thus the prophets have been confounded, for they have told us that prosperity would mean less crime. We have the prosperity, certainly enough, but we also have a worrying increase in crime. Really, it is happiness which brings less crime; and happiness cannot be purchased: it is a by-product of a busy life devoted to other purposes than pleasure-seeking. They are not happy because they have too much leisure and too much money which they have not been taught to use. From their baby days they have been given everything they cried for, that money could buy, so they do not know any better than to try to buy pleasures and they need money and more money to be content. When the money runs out, the only scope for excitement they can find in towns and built-up areas is hooliganism or crime. It is very boring trying to kill time on street-corners, especially in the dull monotonous new estates.

This is one of the things that lead to the violence of gangs of armed youths. Gangs are not new—youngsters are gregarious; what is new is the arms and the violence and the complete disregard for law and order. They still carry knives and other offensive weapons in spite of the law, not so much because they intend to use them but in a spirit of bravado—to look and to feel big. With drink and boredom they drift into circumstances in which the use of these weapons becomes possible, and blood flows. Individually they are harmless, inarticulate, and cowardly: in a gang they are a menace. One or two vicious leaders can easily lead a harmless gang into lawlessness or senseless violence; for the great failing of all youth is human respect. There are many districts which are terrorized by gangs of youth, but no one dares to complain for fear of reprisals. The police are unable to check, control or protect.

There lies the danger: youngsters as a whole are unsettled by the success of these lawless gangs which manage to defy authority and they lose faith in the order and the dignity of society; while the gangs are intoxicated by the feeling that they are above the law.

Once, not so very long ago, a boy in his early teens felt it unmanly to have much to do with girls. Naturally at that age he was beginning to become interested, but common opinion and his own shyness led him to look for friendship and companionship among others of his own sex. Girls, too, were inclined to keep to themselves. An innate modesty kept the sexes rather apart, while they were maturing and until they were better fitted later in their teens to look for serious friendships with others of the opposite sex, in fact, to begin the first eliminating stages of courtship. Today it is almost true to say that youth is obsessed with sex. There is no reserve between the sexes (and, if the truth were told, the girls are probably worse than the boys); there is no respect, no inhibitions, no supervision, no safeguards. There used not to be such license between boys and girls. It exists today not only among the tougher elements but also between boys and girls who are considered well brought up. The results are sometimes frightening and sometimes disastrous. It is not uncommon to see immoral dress and immoral conduct in public. Young people go off together on holidays. Children are seriously courting while still at school, even become engaged while still at school. No wonder the recurring nightmare of the modern social workers is pregnant schoolgirls. A particularly vicious feature is that innocent youngsters are sometimes jeered and taunted into immorality by more experienced companions, who are probably jealous of their innocence. This horrible picture of the children of the nation can be better understood, when you consider the immoral background to their lives; today sexual immorality is flaunted in public; they have no help or advice or guidance or training from their parents; their turbulent passions are bombarded by immoral films, books, pictures, advertisements and so on, which one might be justified in imagining were expressly aimed at them. No wonder then that so many try to salvage wrecked lives by early marriage, followed too often by divorce

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or separation, judicial or otherwise, leaving more poor children to grow up, somehow or other, in this immoral jungle.

Never before have young people had so much independence. Once family ties were stronger and lasted longer, well on into the early twenties, because parents really controlled their family and held the purse strings, thus providing a check on extravagance and youthful follies, as well as making independence economically impossible. Although the onset of puberty is found to be earlier in the modern child, so that independence would naturally be earlier sought, yet even little children are unnaturally independent of their parents, making their own decisions about dress, behaviour, companions and amusements.

Further, in these days of an ageing population, there is a shortage of man-power, and young people are badly needed. They have been quick to sense the atmosphere and to grasp the possibility of independence. Even half-trained typists, for instance, can command a wage of £8 a week. It is only too easy for them to leave home and to be quite free to lead their own lives. They can easily find lodgings, of a sort, in the big towns. Sometimes boys and girls club together to share a single room, so finding greater freedom and having the more money to spend.

Fundamentally, the reason for the present situation of modern youth is that for the man in the street religion has lost all validity; the shell of morality left by the Reformation has cracked badly and is falling to pieces. As the morality of the parents is nothing more today than self-interest, the children are growing up without any moral or religious training, with no ideals of chastity or purity or marriage, without even an understanding of authority, whether the authority be that of God or of the state or of only man, with a galling insolence towards age, with no respect for women. They have no standards whether civil, moral or religious. Their sole criterion is "What I want", or "What I like".

Inevitably this has shattered the marriage ideal and has led to the breakdown of the family as a unit in society. There is widespread divorce and legal or illegal separation. Probation officers are plagued for help to patch up shaky marriages; these are the ones that come to light, but how many more marriages

are falling to pieces in the shadows? More and more children every year are being deprived of a settled, happy domestic background, which is essential to them if they are to grow up happy, healthy and good. And in these days of unenlightened self-interest, many of the children of sound marriages come into the world unwelcome, tolerated as an unfortunate burden. All this must have a deleterious effect, obviously on the children directly involved, but also on children as a whole.

Even in good homes the evil is not always counteracted, because good parents today are too often inclined to avoid their responsibilities towards their children, not so much in the matter of food, clothes and schooling, but in the matter of character formation and spiritual training. There is an essential part of every child's education which can come only from the home, from both father and mother. But from infancy upwards, children are not truly educated—they are rather spoiled, or ignored, or bribed. They are not taught, and this is the essence of the matter, to accept or recognize any authority or any need of obedience—whether of God or of the State or even of the parents themselves. They never are taught to submit their wills humbly to the will of a superior for the benefit of all. They grow up a rule to themselves, "like Gods, knowing good and evil", and this was the original downfall of man. Parents lay themselves open to blackmail. By tantrums or sulks or sheer defiance, children can exact a price for obedience or good behaviour. But even when parents are doing their best to train their children, to set limits to the extravagance of young teenagers, to check their craving for money, to control their comings and goings, to sift their friendships, they are faced with the invalid but powerful objection from their children, "All the others do it." So the infection spreads even into really good homes.

Parents today are much more comfortably off, and there is much more money about. This newfound prosperity has come too quickly for digestion, and they have not learned to use their money wisely in regard to their children. They do not train their children in the value of money, which can only be learned by having to manage without it and by having to make a little go a long way. So gradually the younger generation has grown up dependent on money and its slave.

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Parents today, many of them, are not making homes for their children. Some houses today even in the poorer districts are places of comfort and even of luxury, made possible either by the greater family-income or by hire-purchase. Many of them have the atmosphere more of an hotel than of a real home. Luxury is not necessary for youngsters; but what is essential is the warmth and love and comfort of a real home—and security, too, from the world outside, in which worried or weary teenagers can get the consolation or advice or encouragement they need or can share their triumphs and happiness, where they can be their noisy, gregarious, moody selves. Frequently accommodation is so limited that they cannot bring their friends home. They take themselves and their pleasures outside, to enjoy themselves with others of their kind with no supervision and in grave danger. Often the children would not stay at home anyway; and it is a sad fact that they are not always welcome to stay at home, because their parents refuse to make the sacrifice necessary to understand and tolerate their own children. And television can ruin the social life in a home.

But what kind of a home is it, when mother has been at work all day, and now, already tired out, has to set to and to cope with the housework. The wages of the wife in many families is considered an essential part of the family economy: to maintain a far higher level of living than their own parents ever dreamt of, to pay for the television or the car, to keep up with the hire-purchase on furniture, radiogram or washing-machine, to pay for expensive holidays, to pay a much larger rent.

Families today are not knit together as they used to be; they are rather groups of individuals living together under the same name and the same roof. An illustration of this is the decline of Sunday as a family day. It was the only day of the week when all the members of the family, father, mother and children, could be together and could do things as a unit. So the unity of the family was fostered. They could all go to church together, worshipping God together as a unit: family worship is declining these days. They could all have the Sunday dinner together: this quasi-sacramental practice used to be obligatory. They could take exercise and recreation together: you see few family

groups in the park on a Sunday. Now they are too selfishly entrenched in their own interests and amusements (sloth, sport, television, Sunday papers or excursions) to sacrifice themselves for the good of the family. With no strong ties binding them to the family, youngsters find it the easier to leave home and feel no great loss.

Parents abdicate their rights and privileges to the school; and by and large the education given today in schools is failing in its essential purpose. It is filling young minds with facts and sharpening young wits, but it does not attempt to strengthen and form young wills; it attempts to shape the intelligence but it ignores the conscience. One particularly bad example is what happened at least one year in a school for senior girls; the children were graphically instructed in the facts of life and then also graphically instructed in the perils of venereal disease. So there was one group of impressionable adolescents who knew all there is to know but were morally irresponsible. Who could hope to scare them into virtue? On the other hand, no school however good and no teacher however well-meaning can hope to achieve anything without the backing and co-operation of a good home.

The problem is not made easier by the very much larger schools where there are hundreds of semi-anonymous boys and girls in uniform. We Catholics have suffered badly in being deprived of our compact all-age parish schools, where every child and every family was thoroughly known by priest and teacher. In the huge inter-parochial schools, the individual must be swamped and no one can have the intimate knowledge and understanding that these young people badly need. There is a further difficulty in the raising of the school age. In theory it may be good, but only if the extra year or two is being satisfactorily employed and the youngsters are becoming better people for the extra education. That can happen. But on the one hand, it is a fact that children are maturing earlier these days; and on the other, these young maturing adults are subjected to extra years of being treated as children. This they resent; being resentful, they are bored, and boredom is the great enemy of youth. If there were more teachers, and if the extra year at school were employed in carefully bridging the vast gap

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between school and working life, an education better geared to working reality, then the extra year could not but do good. The extra year must be designed not only to produce better workers but to produce better people both in work and in leisure. The problem peculiar to our modern prosperity is the right use of leisure. The growth of automation can only increase the problem. The day is not far gone when children were just pushed out of school with no real preparation for working life at all and left to fend for themselves as best they could. Not enough is being done even today.

Fundamentally, it seems that the root trouble with our youth lies in the home. Children are suffering for the sins of their parents, sins of omission and commission; and there will be no cure until the homes of England are producing the right kind of educated young people. To tackle the problem from the other end is only a palliative; if the rottenness in the moral life of England remains, then it must produce its rotten fruit, and the state of youth must grow even worse. We have to do all we can to save our own young people and to help all young people; but we ought to do everything in our power to lay sound and true foundations for the next generation.

RONALD PEPPER

A NEW APPROACH TO YOUTH: THE OASIS MOVEMENT

IT HAS often been said that young people are idealists particularly if they have been well educated. They have learnt certain standards of life and have been taught to have certain purposes in view as they make progress in whatever career they have chosen to follow. This is true of youth whether it is Christian or otherwise, and we see the effect of this idealism in the energetic self-sacrifice which many of them are willing to make for what we must judge to be bad purposes; for example, atheistic Communism. It need hardly be said that young people who have been well educated in the Christian way of life also

have the advantage of ideals. Generally speaking, while they are young they have not been affected by the disillusionment that comes as they grow older and realize that very few people live according to ideals, that the majority are motivated by purely selfish reasons. Unfortunately, today, owing to the insecurity of society which is quickly communicated to young people as soon as they are old enough to think, many of them now seem to begin their adult lives without ideals and with a cynical approach to the future. This, of course, is disastrous, both for themselves as individuals and for society of which they are members.

Generally speaking, however, we can say that the young people being educated in our Catholic schools do retain their idealism into the final years of school life. These are the future parents, priests, nuns and leaders of Christian society, and it is important that their idealism should be channelled towards the practical end of establishing the Kingdom of God in this world, of creating from the mass of human beings among whom they will live the Body of Christ, the Church, which is of its nature intended to embrace all men without exception.

It is the experience of those who have most to do with the training of youth that at this stage almost anything may be asked of them with good hope of a generous response. If they are asked for much, they will give much; if they are asked for little, they will give little and gradually lose interest. A slight demand is not enough to capture the imagination of young people.

It is on the principle of this intrinsic generosity of the young that the Oasis Movement is founded. It came into being almost accidentally but no doubt providentially. A Roman Jesuit, Fr Virginio Rotondi, a man of wide experience and great gifts in handling young people, found himself in 1950 with a group of girls who wished to consecrate their youth to God. The group, thirty in number, made their consecration in the chapel of the Sacred Heart Nuns in Rome on 1 November 1950, a few hours before Pope Pius XII defined the dogma of the Assumption of our Lady. At the time nobody realized that this was the beginning of a world-wide movement, but very rapidly it was taken up in other quarters and spread throughout Europe

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and into South America. Even in English-speaking countries, such as England and the United States, some people having heard of the Oasis Movement have made its act of consecration. There are no records of those who do this but it is quite certain that throughout the world there are now several hundred thousand of young people consecrated to God in this special manner.

The Oasis Movement is closely associated with the Movement for a Better World. Although it is of its nature distinct, it can be thought of perhaps as an aspect of the Movement for a Better World particularly adapted to young people with their future responsibilities in the world before them. Fr Rotondi is one of the oldest associates of Fr Riccardo Lombardi, S.J., the Director of the Movement for a Better World. They were working together, before the Movement itself began in 1952, when Father Lombardi was preaching his Crusade of Charity in Italy and throughout Europe in the immediate post-war period, and the present source of the Oasis Movement and the chapel specially reserved for it are in the International Centre of the Movement for a Better World at Rocca di Papa in the Alban Hills of Rome. Here may be seen many young people, boys and girls, who have made the Oasis consecration and show in their lives the effect it can have in the generous and cheerful service they give to the Church. Many others visit the Centre and the chapel to renew their spirit of dedication or to follow courses of Spiritual Exercises. The climax of such gatherings came in November 1960, when the Movement celebrated the tenth anniversary of its beginning. The celebration took the form of a Solemn Triduum, and at various times during these days no less than six Cardinals took part and gave addresses to the large numbers who attended. On each day Holy Mass was offered by one of Their Eminences or Benediction given. A Mass celebrated on the Feast of All Saints by Fr Rotondi was televised to the whole of Italy, together with a sermon by Fr Lombardi.

What exactly is the spirit that led to this great celebration? The Oasis Movement is a movement towards greater spiritual fertility in this somewhat arid world in which we live. Those who make the Oasis consecration become small oases in their

own particular surroundings. They make the consecration not simply for personal benefit but in order to contribute something of value to society. The Oasis Movement, therefore, has a very important apostolic purpose. However, the Movement is not an organization in the sense of something which one joins. The oases, i.e. those who belong to the Movement, come from every sort of organization or from no organization. If they belong to Catholic Action, Third Order, Sodality, Y.C.W., or the Legion of Mary, or any other association, the Oasis consecration enables them to be better members. If any particular organization covered in its conditions of membership everything that is included in the consecration of the Oasis Movement, its members would in effect already be oases even though they did not use that name. Everyone who is moved by grace to make this consecration is asked these questions: Will you offer your youth to Jesus Christ? Will you make certain further promises with regard to your spiritual life and apostolic work?

Like the Movement for a Better World in relation to the Church as a whole, the Oasis Movement simply tries to create a new rhythm in the lives of young people, a rhythm that leads gently but certainly to a greater love of our Blessed Lord. There are no centres of the Oasis Movement, no badge, no bulletin, no subscription, no membership card. It is simply the spirit of complete consecration to our Lord which is in fact the spirit of Christianity itself. The inclination of youth is to be impatient with half-measures. It is all or nothing. The Oasis Movement provides young people with the opportunity of giving their whole youth to God. It offers a formula of consecration which does not in itself involve any active work in the Church but will, if it takes effect, lead people to seek some form of activity in the already established organizations.

Among the difficulties that teenagers have to face as they grow up is the problem of chastity. Only too often through lack of instruction and proper guidance they try to face this problem alone and solve it badly. The Oasis Movement is designed to catch young people before this crisis has been reached, so that they are in a position to offer their innocence to God. This is done by means of a private vow of chastity. It is not a vow of virginity and adds nothing by way of obligation to the natural

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obligation of chastity, but it does add to the practice of chastity the virtue of religion, so that the efforts necessary to remain chaste in an unchaste world become acts of divine worship.

Anyone with experience will immediately foresee the danger. Many teenagers have acquired habits of unchastity without realizing what was happening. These habits are very difficult to overcome and many never succeed in conquering them. The Oasis consecration is not for these unless the sinful habits can be mastered. It would confer no benefit on a young man or woman if, through the consecration, an additional sin of sacrilege were added to the sin of unchastity. The Oasis consecration is for those particularly who have preserved their innocence and gives them the incentive to keep it intact throughout their youth. The Movement has this limited immediate view, to cover the difficult period from adolescence to maturity. After that, there are other means of preserving virtue. This is designed specifically to deal with the problems of youth.

There is no purpose in considering the objections which will immediately spring to the minds of many people hearing of the Oasis Movement for the first time. All these objections seem to have been considered by the Holy Office when it issued the Decree of Approbation of the Oasis Movement. Four conditions are laid down under which the consecration may be made:

- (1) The confessor's advice must be obtained in order to remove all danger of undertaking the vow lightly or without forethought.
- (2) The vow may be taken for a single day, or for periods up to a maximum of six months.
- (3) Any priest can absolve from the vow at any time.
- (4) No new obligation is added to the already existing natural obligation.

These conditions seem to provide a complete safeguard, and it is perhaps worth emphasizing that the purpose of the Oasis vow is to preserve the chastity of the innocent and to sanctify it, and not to restore chastity to those who have lost it, even though it might in some cases achieve this purpose.

Generally speaking, the Oasis consecration is intended for the period of life before marriage and it is renewed from time to time until then. On 5 October 1958, however, twelve young married couples, all of whom had made the consecration in youth, reconsecrated themselves at a special ceremony. The consecration in this case was, of course, to a chastity proper in married couples, and did not affect their obligations to each other. The purpose here is to preserve marital chastity in married life.

The consecration of the Oasis Movement includes other undertakings, but these are not the object of the vow. They are concerned with the practices of the spiritual life. Oases undertake to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion if possible every day; the intention is daily Mass and Communion even though circumstances may prevent its fulfilment at certain times. They also undertake a daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament, a short period of meditation and the recitation of the Rosary. Anyone who has experienced the value of regularity in the spiritual life will appreciate how helpful these devotional practices would be in enabling young people to remain faithful to their religion.

A characteristic of the Oasis Movement is that it is not mainly concerned with the personal holiness of the individual, but rather with the individual's contribution to the life of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ. The spirit of the Oasis is one of charity and service, to be at the disposition of ecclesiastical authority at all times. The oases undertake to respond to the call of the Church on every occasion, unless they are prevented by moral or physical impossibility. This is to be at the service of the whole Church, universally and always. This spirit is summed up in the phrase, the Triple Yes: yes to superiors, yes to equals, yes to inferiors. The obligation of obedience to superiors is recognized by everybody, but willing obedience, loving obedience is not always given. Again to say yes to equals is sometimes thought to be contrary to the dignity of the individual. The oases see this willingness to yield to the wishes of others as part of their service of their fellow-members of the Body of Christ. Even more difficult is to say yes to inferiors, whenever this is possible in view of responsibilities and obliga-

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tions. This is seen as the humble service of our fellow Christians, imitating our Lord at the Last Supper when He washed His disciples' feet. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you," said our Lord. The Oasis Movement seeks to form a generation of young people who will obey that command.

Perhaps we may sum up the idea of the Oasis Movement by saying that it seeks to develop in young people, before they have been spoiled by the spirit of the world, a full realization of their vocation as Christians. To be baptized is to receive the vocation of God to membership of the Mystical Body of His Son, and to live the life of a member of that Body in whatever way Divine Providence may lead. Vocation is universal among Christians. Without a doubt, the important question the young Christian has to answer before setting out into the world is this, What is my vocation? The training of children so that they will discover the answer to this question is the purpose of Christian education. This is why Catholics in this country are asked to make such great sacrifices for the sake of our schools. Only in Catholic schools can children be educated in this way. It does not mean, as we know very well, that Catholic education must be limited to purely religious aspects of life. A general education, designed to lead each child to its proper place in human society, is necessary, and our schools could never survive if they did not provide an education equal to that in State or private non-Catholic schools. But the Catholic school must give something more, this training in the spirit of Christianity, training in the full understanding of the meaning of Christian vocation, so that even secular learning is seen as a means of serving others. At the end of such a training, consciously and conscientiously given, our young people will be able to face that question confident of finding the right answer, the right answer both from the point of view of their own talents and from the point of view of God's will.

The majority, both boys and girls, who end their school careers by asking themselves, What is my vocation? will answer that it is to follow a worldly career, to marry and bring up a Christian family. But the Church of God has certain needs. It has need not only of members who will play their part in

increasing the membership of the Church in family life, but also of specialists, officers, who can guide and lead the ordinary members, priests both secular and religious, nuns, members of secular institutes, and other people dedicated completely to the service of the Church. If the Church has these needs, it is inconceivable that God should deny the vocations necessary. We can take it for granted that God does His part in providing for His Church. The reason why the Church suffers from a chronic shortage of vocations in every field can only be a lack of response to grace on the part of the young members of the Church. It is to inspire in young people this sense of responsiveness to the grace of God, by canalizing their idealism and enthusiasm in an act of consecration, that the Oasis Movement came into existence. It is a responsiveness, as we have seen, to every sort of vocation, but if it were to be found in every youngster, many more would realize that their vocation lay in the priesthood or the religious life in one form or another. It has been stated recently that something in the region of 75 per cent of the girls leaving our convent schools consider whether they have a religious vocation; comparatively few answer yes. It may well be, however, that they frame the question from a selfish point of view, Do I want to be a nun? Whereas it should be framed from the opposite point of view, Does God want me to be a nun? This form of the question immediately introduces the thought of the sacrifices involved, the idea of service to the Mystical Body of Christ which is part of the religious vocation. Moreover the question has to be put in wider terms; not simply, does God want me to be a nun, but also does He want me to be a wife and mother, does He want me to teach or to nurse; all vocations are important, some more than others. But relative to the individual the most important is the one God wills. And furthermore, what are the needs of the Church, the living organism which is the Body of Christ made up of countless vitally united members? In this Body each of us, whatever our age or state of life, has a duty to know the needs of others and satisfy them if we can. Consider, for example, the needs of the members of Christ in South America, where hundreds of thousands have no opportunity of being taught their Faith or receiving the Sacraments because of the shortage of priests and

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nuns. How many boys and girls would receive the grace of a vocation to those lands if they asked themselves, What does God want of me, with those particular needs in mind?

This attitude to vocation cannot be acquired in a day. It can only come from consistent training over a period of time. There may be many ways of doing this. But the Oasis Movement and the consecration provide a method which has been proved successful in producing not only religious and priestly vocations but also thousands of young people who pursue a worldly career and enter marriage in this spirit of vocation. It is a method that has the approval of the Church, who like a wise mother has provided safeguards against abuse or misuse.

Many people in England have come into contact with or heard of the Oasis Movement, and have felt that here may be something that will help us to face the problem of guiding young people from the insecurity of the modern world into the security and freedom of the children of God. Perhaps this article may provide them with information which they have lacked hitherto, and inspire them to introduce the spirit of the Oasis to the young people in their care, to the advantage of the life of the Church in general, of the priesthood and the religious life, of the married state and of all the Catholic organizations which seek to serve the Church in so many different ways. The spirit of service which is characteristic of the Oasis Movement is the spirit which the Christian Body needs to show to the world, the desire to serve everyone without exception in the spirit of charity, so that those who watch us with critical eyes may be moved to exclaim, Yes, see how these Christians love one another! We want this to be said not for our own glory, but in order that the millions outside the Church of God may begin to take the first steps towards it, and we shall see the beginning of the process that will lead ultimately to all mankind, for whom Christ died on the Cross, becoming members of His Body and enjoying the fruits of the Redemption both here and in eternity.

WILFRID STIBBS

THE SECULAR INSTITUTES: THEIR UNIVERSAL RELEVANCE

IT IS thirteen years since the associations officially known as "Secular Institutes"¹ became a part of the life of the Church. They are associations of the faithful, consisting of secular priests, or laymen,² or lay women, who bind themselves permanently to the pursuit of the goal of the Christian life—perfect charity—by means of vows, or an equivalent self-engagement of a serious nature.³ But whereas the previously recognized "states of perfection", i.e. (a) that of the religious Orders and Congregations, and (b) that of the Societies of the Common Life, have always spoken of "leaving the world" in order to live the Christian life perfectly, the *Secular Institutes*, as their title implies, deliberately remain *in the world*, in order to do the very same thing. This is the essential difference between their way of life and the Religious Life.

There are also a number of minor differentiations. One of them, but it is precisely of the sort that looms large in popular imagination and produces much misunderstanding, is the fact that, generally speaking, religious are distinguishable from ordinary Catholics, and up to a point from one another, by the wearing of distinctive, uniform dress—the religious habit. Normally, Secular Institutes have no special habit, and thus "look like everybody else".⁴ An analogous difference is that the

¹ About fifty have received pontifical or episcopal approval; many similar groups are in process of being approved. Descriptive lists of all these associations with attempts to classify them may be seen in Jean Beyer, S.J., *Les Instituts Séculiers* (Louvain, 1954), pp. 367-402; Dom Robert Lemoine, O.S.B., *Le Droit des Religieux du Concile de Trente aux Instituts Séculiers*, *Museum Lessianum* (1956), pp. 546-73; *Les Instituts Séculiers dans l'Eglise. Doctrines et réalisations actuelles* (Bonne Presse, Paris), 1959. The fullest and most systematic is that of N. Gil, C.M.F., which has been appearing since 1958 in the *Commentarium pro Religiosis, De Institutis Saecularibus hucusque approbatis* (aa. 1947-1956), 37 (1958), 69-79, 181-93, 317-22; 38 (1959), 69-78; 39 (1960), 101-6.

² Some Institutes are composite, with sections for priests, laymen and women, and some male Institutes admit a certain number of priests, e.g. the *Opus Dei*.

³ Some Institutes take three vows, of poverty, chastity and obedience; some, not all of these; but there is always a serious *donation*, *oblation*, etc., which is of equal force. There has been a considerable discussion about the nature of their vows, whether public or merely private, or possibly, of some new, intermediate kind.

⁴ They often wear some inconspicuous badge or sign; some have a special 'choir dress', and some a professional uniform, but there is no characteristic 'habit'.

religious usually lives in a community, which is housed in an establishment of monastic, conventual, or collegiate type. Members of Secular Institutes do not necessarily, or even usually, live in community, though they must have at least one common centre for purposes of government and administration and for the formation and intermittent community living of their members. It is quite normal for the majority of these to live in isolation, in their own homes or lodgings; even their common centres, however large and efficiently organized, and frequently possessing a semi-public oratory, are not monasteries or convents. These are not the only distinctions between the older states of perfection and this newer one, but on the whole they are the differences which cause most confusion, barring the way to a correct appreciation of this new mode of Christian life.

Over a dozen years of full recognition by the Holy See, and yet the movement is still *new*, and in a sense has to be presented as something new. The basic possibility of such a pattern of life, however, is exceedingly old, and a remark of Harnack's on the many-sidedness of Christianity itself may, not inappropriately, be adapted to this context. After enumerating a number of elements in early Christianity, any one of which, he alleges, "seemed to be the principal, if not the only one", he adds, as yet another of these, "the news of the birth of a new people, who for all that, have hiddenly existed from the beginning of things".¹

This "hiddenly" existing way of life is, indeed, very ancient, and is also persistently recurrent in the annals of Christian sanctity. In modern times, however, what may be termed a "movement towards the Secular Institutes" is perhaps most clearly discernible in the life and writings of the heroic and saintly Jesuit, Fr Pierre Joseph Picot de Clorivière. A survivor of the suppressed Society, he established, at the height of the French Revolutionary Terror in the last decade of the eighteenth century, the Society of the Sacred Heart and the Society of the Daughters of Mary. Both, after various vicissitudes, still exist, the former as the premier Secular Institute for diocesan

¹ Cf. *The Mission and the Expansion of Christianity*, Vol. I, ii, epilogue, cited by Donald Attwater, *St John Chrysostom* (London, 1959), pp. 22-3.

priests, and the latter in the form of a congregation of religious sisters.¹ The movement, so clearly delineated in his correspondence and the rules for his two societies, gathered force during the period of the modern Catholic Revival, and became, particularly under the pontificates of Pius XI and Pius XII, a movement towards the canonical recognition of the status and organization of Secular Institutes. Both these Popes took a deep personal interest in this matter,² but it was Pius XII who, in his Encyclical *Provida Mater Ecclesiae* of 2 February 1947, accorded them recognition and formulated a *lex peculiaris* to be the basis of all such foundations. A year later he hailed the new way of life with enthusiasm and gratitude in his *Motu Proprio*, *Primo feliciter*.³ These new apostolic auxiliaries of the clergy are frankly welcomed by the Pontiff, and their organizations praised as "unrivalled forms of confederation" (*Provida Mater*), and "truly providential" (*Primo feliciter*). They are clearly distinguished from, yet in many ways assimilated to, the existing Religious Institutes. In presenting the Church with this new "state of perfection" the Pope repeatedly emphasizes their "secularity", for, he says, "in this lies the whole reason for the existence of such Institutes . . . [their] perfection is to be exercised and professed in the world; and consequently must be adapted to secular life", and their apostolate too "is to be faithfully exercised not only *in the world*, but as originating *from the world*".⁴

The growth of the Secular Institutes, especially since 1947, has been truly phenomenal. The number of recognized groups, or groups in various stages of formation, the number of vocations, particularly to the more highly and internationally organized Institutes, is equally striking. So is their geographical distribution; most countries have now received or even originated such groups. Their members are to be found everywhere, at home or in the foreign missions, applying themselves to every sort of apostolic work. In some localities their functioning

¹ Beyer, *op. cit.*, 35-50. Cf. also Henri Monier-Vinard, s.j., *Clorivière in Did. de Spiritualité*, Vol. II, i (Paris, 1953), coll. 974-9.

² Beyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 64 ff.

³ English versions of the documents can be seen in *Secular Institutes (A Symposium)* (Blackfriars, 1952), pp. 41-65.

⁴ *Primo feliciter* II, cf. *Secular Institutes*, pp. 55-6.

seems to be taken by everybody as a matter of course. This, however, is by no means true of Great Britain and Ireland, where their impact up to the present has been very limited. There is still a widespread lack of knowledge concerning them. There is not only lack of real knowledge, but a great many inaccurate notions, leading, at least in some quarters, to lack of understanding about their aims and a consequent lack of sympathy. There are, actually, ten or more groups, known to me, who certainly belong to the general current of ideas and aspirations. Of these, three fully approved Institutes appear as such in the *Catholic Directory*—the *Opus Dei*, *Teresianae* and the *Ladies of Nazareth* (more usually known as *The Grail*). One which is pontifically approved does not: it is the *Union Caritas Christi*.¹ But our Catholic public hears little of these efforts that are going on in their midst, and the Institutes remain unknown, and sometimes misunderstood, even by the clergy and religious. Only a minority of the latter are likely to encounter the Institutes in the course of their pastoral work, and then only because their own missionary endeavours and those of the Institutes happen to meet. It is easy to know some of them through such activities, and still not to know them at all as a "state of perfection", with all that this entails. Unfortunately, many of the more immediately obvious ways in which the Institutes might seek to dispel "the cloud of unknowing" which envelops them, are also the ways which, instead of lessening, might even increase, inaccurate conceptions about their real essence and aims.²

The initial and most urgent step towards a real apprecia-

¹ The other groups, about which I am prepared to furnish information if required, are mainly for women, and nearly all connected with a religious Order; Benedictine (Oblates), Dominican (Third Order), Franciscan (Third Order), Carmelite, Servite, Our Lady of Hospitality, Compagnia di San Paolo, etc. Incidentally, I know of a number of priests who are interested either in the movement generally or in Institutes for Diocesan Priests in particular. It might be a good idea to put these priests in touch with one another. Might it not be well also to commemorate the late Pope, His Holiness Pius XII, by the formation of a small, informal society of those interested in these matters?

² Although some part in the apostolate is essential to their status, not all engage in external activities of the apostolate, or not to the same extent. There are some which may be almost entirely contemplative. Most ways of publicity tend to divert attention to outward manifestations; the more colourful and picturesque they are the better. It is difficult to shout, sing or mime the interior desire of perfection; as it proved difficult to dramatize the interior struggle of obedience.

tion of what these societies are, as distinct from the thrilling and useful things that some of them sometimes do, would appear to be the realization that they are not simply an interesting, yet accidental and perhaps transient, development in the Church, but, on the contrary, one that is essential, providential, and universally relevant. Almighty God Himself has brought this development about in His infinitely loving benevolence towards all His children.

Most Catholics would probably be prepared to admit that an event such as the enthusiasm for monastic asceticism awakened by St Athanasius' *Life of Antony* was a major and providential turning-point in the growth of Christian civilization. The coming of the friars in the thirteenth century, or of the sons of St Ignatius Loyola in the sixteenth, surely deserves to rank in the same way. On the same plane, the gradual working out of the pattern of the Secular Institutes and their emergence in 1947 is to be viewed as just such another milestone in the long journey of the Church of Christ towards the Parousia. There can hardly be great presumption in thinking that, when future historians look back at our times with objective detachment, they will stress the multiple importance of the pontificate of Pius XII, and single out in it the *Provida Mater* of 1947 as a truly epoch-making date in the spiritual as well as in the juridical history of the Church.

The supreme significance of this new way of life to those men and women who sincerely believe that God has given them the vocation to live it need not be laboured. But the rest of the Church may not safely be allowed to regard such calls as religious or priestly vocations which have somehow gone wrong, or which cannot be fulfilled save in a diluted or mitigated form.¹ Nor must they be considered as passing and exceptional solutions, by way of concession, to the special difficulties of our times. On the contrary, we must come to acknowledge this vocation as something existing in its own right, an approved modality of that perfection towards which all Christians must tend; in the past it has produced the well-nigh in-

¹ Admittedly, there are expressions in the *Provida Mater* which, if read in isolation, might seem to countenance the view of the Secular Institutes being a kind of "second-best choice". Cf. *Sec. Inst.*, pp. 46 ff. But the whole of the document and still more the whole of *Primo feliciter* renders such a view inadmissible.

numerable variants of the religious life and, in our time, the dedicated life of Secular Institutes.

A frank, welcoming attitude to these new recruits for perfection in the world, and a cordial "helping hand" to this new missionary "militia", such as was exemplified by the late Pope and by so many great bishops and priests of our day,¹ if widely spread throughout the clergy and laity, would be much, but not enough. Admiring appreciation of the generosity which now drives some souls into Secular Institutes, as it has ever driven others into the desert or the cloister, to the foreign mission-field or the leper colony, would be more, but still not enough. For all this is no more than an appreciation of the value of the Institutes for *them*—for those called to them—rather than for *us*, all of us, without exception. The universal—that is, *Catholic*—relevance of this way of life will be fully apparent only when it comes to be incorporated in ordinary pastoral preaching, as part of the supremely important lesson that the call to perfection is both universally possible and universally obligatory. It is no paradox to say that priests, secular and regular, can and should derive from an attentive consideration of this vocation a fresh incentive to love and cherish their own, as well as a new manner of inspiring their flocks. Religious too, whilst contemplating in the Secular Institutes a God-given vocation which is markedly different from their own, should be induced to trace the common origin of both ways right back to the Gospel, and so combine a liberal admiration for what is new with a rediscovery and a re-invigoration of their own more ancient calling. As for the laity, those countless Christians who remain, perhaps deliberately and at the call of grace, outside all these special vocations, but who all the same are signed with baptism and "called to be saints", surely they more readily still are likely to be thrilled to hear of this timely new witness to the high ideals of their Christian profession, rendered by men and women who so closely resemble them in all the ordinary conditions of living.

The validity of this contention—that the Secular Institutes are a providential intervention to re-enliven spirituality at *all* levels—may perhaps best be shown by sketching the sort of

¹ *Primo feliciter*, VI, 1, in *Sec. Inst.*, pp. 56, 57-8.

change, in each case revolutionary, that their advent has brought about in three characteristic fields of Catholic activity and ecclesiastical studies, namely, Canon Law, the history of the Church, and the doctrinal presentation of the spiritual life. The change is fairly described as revolutionary, because, in each field, the advent of the Secular Institutes imposes a patient re-examination, and an honest re-evaluation of the familiar data. Even if it were argued that a failure to incorporate this new factor into our Christian *Weltanschauung* would not necessarily result in its total disintegration, it would still be true that it would narrow our views, instead of opening up broader vistas of true Christian freedom.

First, the approval of the Secular Institutes signifies a real revolution in the Canon Law of the Church and in the ways of canonical thinking. This evidently concerns canonists, but does it, to any great extent, concern anybody else? Does it concern the priest in his pastoral work, or Christians endeavouring to keep the faith in a not very helpful world?

Anyone who is not convinced of the revolutionary character of what has happened would do well to ponder the weighty and interesting, and at times amusing, treatise of Dom Robert Lemoine on the evolution of the laws affecting religious life from the Council of Trent "until the Secular Institutes".¹ In it may be read, among other things, of the long, tortuous journey travelled by the Societies of Common Life to obtain recognition of their vows as *religious* vows, and themselves as *religious*. The outcome of that journey was by no means a foregone conclusion, nor was it reached without many great sacrifices. In comparison, the attainment of canonical status by the Secular Institutes was not nearly so chequered; it was also rapid, and very thoroughgoing—in a word—revolutionary. The same authority also brings out the truth of Harnack's remark which we have ventured to adapt to the Secular Institutes—the latent presence of this "new people" long before they emerged into the canonical light of day. The characteristic aims and ideas, and often the very methods, of the Secular Institutes were conceived, time and time again, by spiritually minded persons, but for a variety of reasons were found not yet viable. Frequently

¹ Cf. note (1), p. 281.

the founders of religious institutes have had to sacrifice their full vision and accept merely what was deemed practicable in the then existing state of society and the Church. One prominent example of this was the recurrent problem about the part women might play in an active apostolate without the traditional safeguards of cloister, grille, and habit. Shall we not say that the great founder-saints sowed indeed in good ground, but had to wait for modern times in order to see the harvesting of the promised hundredfold?

The second part of the *Provida Mater* is the new *lex peculiaris* for the Secular Institutes; it was lacking in the Code, and hence in the commentaries and manuals of Canon Law used in seminaries. Priests, therefore, who completed their studies before 1947 and have not been specially "alerted", e.g. by the cropping up of this matter at a Deanery Conference, may not even yet be fully aware of the existence of this new system of law. It has necessitated the setting up of a special office within the Congregation of Religious, the Secretary-General of which, incidentally, is a layman—itsself something of a revolutionary nature in that body.¹ It has been necessary to insert a new page into editions of such typical manuals as that of Vermeersch-Creusen, and doubtless into others too; a quite formidable body of canonical literature on the subject has already accumulated, as will be plain to anyone who watches the bibliographical sections of ecclesiastical periodicals. It may be necessary for a priest to make some attempt to cope with this mass of material, if he has a Secular Institute in his parish, or is called on to direct aspirants, or asked to help Institutes in their "formation", by giving them retreats, recollections, or lectures, and the like. Even if he is not directly drawn into the orbit of the Institutes in these ways, he must not fail to distinguish them "from other general Associations of the faithful" (*C.I.C., Pars III, Lib. II*), as well as from every variety of the religious life.² In his preaching of the ideal of Christian sanctity he may no longer utilize the religious state alone as an exemplar, but must know how to utilize this new way of life as well.

This may appear to be an undue emphasis on a merely

¹ He is Don Alvarez del Portillo, member of the *Opus Dei*.

² *Provida Mater, lex peculiaris*, arts. 1-11, in *Sec. Instit.*, p. 48.

technical point, but it is not without importance. Many of the laity, admittedly, and many religious also, unless they happen to be superiors, may live almost without adverting to the existence of Canon Law. Save for such things as episcopal charges at a Visitation, annual proclamations of dispensation from the laws of fasting, or the marriage difficulties of a personal friend, the majority may remain comfortably insulated from the effects of ecclesiastical law. Its requirements for them are the Commandments of the Church listed in the Catechism or filtered down from the pulpit in occasional doses. They would be surprised, and perhaps disconcerted, to learn how minutely even their prayers and devotional life are regulated by the Code, and particularly any forms of association into which they may, through piety or charity, be inclined to enter. It is sometimes hard to see how all this could be passed on to them, without engendering a notion that Canon Law is the province of the hierarchy and the canonists, and comes down to the rest of us merely in the form of prohibitions and restrictions. The papal documents concerning Secular Institutes would do much to dispel this crippling idea, for they are conceived in a very different spirit. It has become a commonplace to refer to the *Provida Mater* as the *Magna Carta* of the Secular Institutes; it really is a charter of liberties for the Christian soul. May it not be that here is an eminently practical way of making Catholics aware of the nature of Canon Law, not simply as restrictions imposed on them by their rulers for the sake of discipline, but as a code of ideals and methods, intended to promote freedom of the spirit and broaden the horizons of every child of God?

If any of the more intelligent and keen of the laity are ever tempted to think that they are being forced to sustain a merely passive role, what better corrective is there than these insistent utterances of the Holy See on the autonomy, the responsibility and the active role played by "seculars"? It is, let us recall, the Church herself in her supreme juridical capacity, and not just a few "advanced" spiritual directors, clerical "*avant-gardistes*", or religious cranks, who extol this new people and bid them emerge from their hidden life into a more public mission for God and for souls.

The Church that Christ founded is a society, and must

have a juridical entity; it is also a visible Church existing in a framework of time and space. In contemplating her we must therefore endeavour to take a total view of the whole human condition, which can be reached only by profound reflexion on the providential nature of all God's dealings with man. Hence the necessity for what is termed "Church history". We are the product of our age and of the past; we cannot know ourselves in the present or the future, unless we take account of *all* the revolutions which separate us from our Pentecostal beginnings in Jerusalem. The particular revolution of ideas, attitudes, applications and methods, which we have designated the movement towards the Secular Institutes, is more than an additional footnote or paragraph to be added to our manuals of Church history; it is a feature of contemporary Catholic life which furnishes one of the essential clues to the interpretation of Christian and human life as a whole.

Not all, of course, are historians, or historically minded. Even priests whose seminary training included a course of ecclesiastical history may not have acquired a historical sense, or the conviction that this was a major subject, like dogmatic, moral or pastoral theology, with an obligation to keep themselves up to date in it, but they have at least become aware of the importance of sound historical method in all ecclesiastical studies today. As for the laity, one can usually count on a tincture of the historical sense, if only because of the demands of apologetics in a non-Catholic *milieu*—how to answer stock objections about Henry VIII's divorce proceedings, the Albigensian Crusade, and—unfailingly—the Inquisition. But here, in the history of the Secular Institutes, we have a phase of our own interior development which cannot be neglected without detriment.

History, to be complete, must be the history of the whole man, including his deepest thoughts and his finest intuitions about the very meaning of life and how it should be lived. Accordingly, the history of the Church must include every phase of the soul's endeavour to find itself and God. The stages through which the Christian has gone in his quest for perfection, in effective imitation of Christ, in union with God in charity and in prayer, simply cannot be regarded as "some aspects of the internal life of the Church"; in a sense, they are

the whole of it. Successive patterns of holiness, such as martyrdom, confessorship and consecrated virginity regarded as substitute for "red" martyrdom, the "regimentation" of prayer and spiritual exercises in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, are all of them essential ingredients of our contemporary Catholicism, and on this plane the rise of the Secular Institutes naturally and inevitably takes its place.

It is not merely that here are more data to be added for the sake of completeness: the movement in question enforces on the church historian the task of re-reading and, perhaps, reinterpreting the already accumulated data. Thus the programme of the Franciscan and other Third Orders, the projects of St Angela Merici, of Mary Ward, of St Vincent de Paul and of many other contributors to perfect Christian living need re-assessment in light of the enlarged categories provided by the Secular Institutes.

One of the lessons of history is the power of the Religious Institutes to proliferate and adapt themselves to great diversities of circumstance, even to rise from the dead. This should be a salutary warning against any inclination to dismiss the Secular Institutes as a fortuitous and passing growth, a mere historical accident, the religious life desperately attempting to cope with the extraordinary needs of our time. The Secular Institutes are an essential part of the modern Catholic Revival. It is noteworthy that whatever aspect of this we choose to examine—whether the liturgico-pastoral renewal, the Biblical and patristic renewal, the Lay Apostolate, or Catholic Action—we are likely to meet the members of these new Institutes at every turn. None of these aspects, particularly the last two, are synonymous with Secular Institutes, but they invariably penetrate one another and overlap.

The signs are that the Secular Institutes have "come to stay". It is noteworthy, however, that Pius XII wished to keep the movement fluid and to circumvent attempts at premature crystallization. The Institutes are an important stage in Catholic development; they are also a pointer towards fresh developments in the future, ever in the direction of a fuller, deeper grasp of the possibilities of Christian life and its inexhaustible adaptability in a changeful world.

Ultimately, however, it is not simply a matter of broadening our canonical horizons, or deepening our historical awareness of the delightful variety of ways in the Christian life; what is chiefly involved is the importance of the Secular Institutes in the theological presentation of the theory and practice of the spiritual life. The Church in her mission to baptize all nations and sanctify the souls of all her children, has unceasingly placed a lofty ideal of perfection before all who would listen. Even when preaching conversion to the hardened sinner or trying to arouse the tepid, she cannot and dare not dilute this high ideal to nominal Catholicism or mediocre practice. She must find ways of teaching the same lesson to the lax as to the fervent; like her Master she must quest in the desert ways for the souls of unbelievers and the indifferent, the unascetical and the anti-clerical. This becomes harder when classical, traditional patterns of holiness, though still remaining *per se* as valid as ever, begin to sound old-fashioned, mediaeval, merely restrictive or too much tied down to formulas and images which have emptied themselves of meaning for many to whom the lesson is addressed. Here, precisely, the "modernity" and the sanctified "secularity" of the new Institutes, to say nothing of their rediscovery and re-evaluation of some of the most ancient elements of sanctity, place a new and valuable weapon in the armoury of the Christian preacher. Once again, he, like some primitive Christian bishop, can use the *argumentum ad hominem*, and point to the Secular Institutes as the bishops did to the ancient ascetics and virgins, saying: "See, these are men and women, just like yourselves, with the same nature, and the same temptations . . . living in the same cities, the same streets, doing the same work, etc." with a full sense of conviction that their words will ring true and awaken a genuine echo in the hearts of many modern people.

It has been discussed, sometimes academically, whether one should speak of a "spirituality" or a "theology" of the lay state,¹ but there can be no doubt whatever that we must have a soundly theological presentation of the perfect Christian life, one which is entirely attuned to the actual conditions and cultural rhythms of the people who form our congregations and is

¹ Beyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 95 ff.

not just lifeless adaptation of the spirituality of the past, or of the clerical or religious state. Here again, Secular Institutes are not only a timely new exemplar, but their members aim at being themselves active workers in this important field. One of the most admirable features of the new legislation is its insistence on adequate theological and spiritual formation. The clergy need not fear that these new auxiliaries in the apostolate will be allowed to remain content with merely amateur standards; nor are they likely to be embarrassed by the sudden access of undisciplined and uninformed zeal. Nevertheless, the existing Institutes, and other aspiring groups in this country, will need for some time to come a good deal of sympathetic assistance from clergy and religious in maintaining the high ideals which have been set before them. They need also much mutual understanding and, at least in certain fields where it proves to be feasible, some degree of collaboration.

It is still possible, I suppose, for a priest in Great Britain, who left the seminary just after the Second World War, not yet to have made any effective contact with the movement. It would certainly be possible for his brother or sister to leave school shortly afterwards, practise the faith with more than average fidelity, take part in several Catholic activities, join more than one association for piety or charity, and still not consciously meet any member of a Secular Institute. Possible, though not nearly so easy as it was for their parents. It seems doubtful if this will be even possible in future. Few as are the Institutes established here, they can no longer be regarded as wholly exotic, foreign, or ill-adapted to local apostolic requirements. What has happened in so many countries abroad will happen here also; the Institutes will emerge from their comparative obscurity, become more generally known, and finally, be taken for granted. Then only shall we be able to see the marvellous way in which a more than common generosity has corresponded with divine grace, to produce this "new people" in God's Church.

GABRIEL REIDY, O.F.M.

ENGLISH SPIRITUAL WRITERS

XXIV. ARCHBISHOP GOODIER

ARCHBISHOP GOODIER deserves to be ranked among the influential spiritual writers of his time, and his influence continues. Yet he is one of the least original of writers; he founded no school, set no fashion, put forward no unusual ideas. That, in fact, was his strength. He is a safe and reliable guide, admirably suited for the needs of ordinary, normal souls among the faithful, just because there is nothing in his writings which one can single out and say of it: "That is Goodier . . . that is his special message."

He was a man of tradition, serenely content to pass on to those who would listen to him the solid nourishment of tried and tested Christian spirituality. The content of what he wrote was rich and full, precisely because it was not his own in any exclusive sense; it was his because he had assimilated it; it was abundant because it was the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, or an interpretation of it as orthodox as any that has come down through the centuries. Goodier was not attracted by anything that savoured of the unusual, the recondite in spirituality. His teaching was simple and profound, even as the Gospel itself reveals through a divine simplicity depths that are unfathomable. He was clear and transparent, like a plate-glass window.

But even the most transparent human mind has its selectivity. There were no peculiarities about the mind or the spiritual teaching of Archbishop Goodier, but inevitably—because he was human and finite—there was a certain characteristic emphasis, an approach, a slant. It was that his mind was focussed on our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word Incarnate. He was above all things a Gospel man. Of his books the two that seem to be exerting the most lasting influence are *The Public Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ* and *The Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ*. It is no accident that it should be by these books that he continues to lead souls to God. They are the summing up of the best he had to say, for all that he wished to say was summed up in Christ.

His mind was incarnational. For him the vital and urgent truth was expressed in the words "No man cometh to the Father but by me." And that meant for him the human Jesus, through the Son as incarnate. He was an evangelical. The dust of controversy and bickering over religion has given that word a certain restrictive quality; it tends to bring to mind an antipathy to sacramental realities and to the rites and ceremonies of ecclesiastical life. There was, of course, none of this restrictive narrowness about Archbishop Goodier. He was an evangelical, a Gospel man, in the sense that he felt very strongly that all that men needed to know on earth was to be learnt by them from the living book which is Christ our Lord. Their way into the supernatural world was to be through the historical, human Jesus. Their approach must be fully and humbly human, making use of all the powers of sense and understanding, of affection and love, focussing those powers on Him who is the image of the invisible God, "that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life".

"For the life was manifested": and it was that manifestation in human reality which was the focus of all Goodier's spirituality. That being so, it is superfluous to add that the dominant note of his teaching is love. Whatever else he was, Goodier was an absolutely orthodox Christian, and no one can be that who does not put charity first and foremost and all the time. This he certainly did.

But within the universal scope of charity there is room for those special emphases which distinguish one human personality from another. Goodier's mind was very balanced, sane and all-embracing; he took in all that was good, and excluded nothing through narrowness, but within his emphasis on the Incarnation there was another, a special focussing of his approach. It was prayer. Under the paramount sovereignty of charity he ranked prayer as the chief means of the spiritual life.

Of the 120 items listed to his credit by Fr Sutcliffe¹—some twenty-five of them being prefaces to books by nuns—one of

¹ *Bibliography of the English Province of the Society of Jesus 1773-1953* (London, 1957).

the most notable is a book entitled *St Ignatius Loyola and Prayer*. It was published by Burns Oates and Washbourne in 1940, and includes a memoir of the Archbishop by the late Fr Henry Keane, S.J. That a book with such a title should have been written by Goodier is doubly significant. First, it underlines his conviction that prayer is of supreme importance; second, it reveals what, after Christ Himself and the life of prayer, was the most eager of his enthusiasms—affection for St Ignatius Loyola.

Goodier was a Jesuit—to put it mildly. He was born in Lancashire and was a Stonyhurst boy; he taught at Stonyhurst for six years before ordination, and after his ordination he taught young Jesuits classics and English at Manresa House, Roehampton, becoming Superior of Juniors and Prefect of Studies. The tragedy of war in 1914 swept him out of this Jesuit seclusion, but it was still to take charge of a Jesuit institution, the University College of St Xavier in Bombay, which had been deprived of its German directors. Forces largely political swirled him out of this into the painful, sometimes agonizing, position of Archbishop of Bombay. But the ties of affection and loyalty to the Society of Jesus never weakened in him, and when he was relieved of the impossible burden of the Archbishopric he was delighted to return as far as he could to Jesuit community life. His personal devotion to St Ignatius remained always an unwavering flame in his heart.

In fact it came near to leading him into hypersensitivity. He was by nature a very sensitive man. If his ardent love for the human Jesus makes one think of John the Beloved Disciple, his temperament recalls rather the gentle Philip. He was intense, but the Lord would hardly have nicknamed him, Boanerges, and when he was hurt he did not hit back angrily, but tended rather to retire and hide the wound. Such a temperament pre-disposed him to hypersensitivity. He wrote a book on St Ignatius and prayer, primarily no doubt because he was convinced that prayer was a very important matter that needed to be written about, but also—one cannot help feeling—in defence of St Ignatius. At the time when he wrote it a mischievous little gibe was going about: "Prayer begins where the Jesuits leave off." That was the kind of thing that was calculated to make him dip his pen in charity and write as sweetly

as he knew how, but with the secret quivering of a lacerated heart for all that.

He was convinced of two things, and he wanted to prove them: that the main aim and point and drive of the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius is to lead to prayer; and that the prayer they were meant to lead to was the very highest, most contemplative, most mystical prayer that could be.

It may perhaps be conceded that those who made little gibes about the woodenness and pedestrian flatness of Jesuit prayer had some good reason for their wrong. Perhaps too many of the Fathers had slipped into clichés in their instructions, and were floundering in platitudes that they did not fully understand. If that were shown to be true, it would but throw into a more vivid light the courage and the insight of Goodier's exposition of the Exercises. It should be remembered also that when he was a young man there was a good deal of suspicion of false mysticism about in the air. In this present article we shall have occasion to comment, at some length perhaps, on a certain shortcoming or limitation in Goodier's conception of prayer, or at least in his practical attitude if not in his theoretical approach. But let us insist first that Fr Steuart was not alone among the English Jesuits in trying to break up whatever woodenness there may have been, and that Goodier too was a fervent advocate of contemplative prayer.

He was a fervent advocate of it; but the question that poses itself is how far did he know it by first-hand, experiential knowledge? Of course the answer to that question depends on an earlier one: just exactly what do you mean by contemplative prayer? And that is a point of perennial discussion. But however one may define contemplative prayer, one thing seems clear about Goodier, that there was something he missed, at least in practice, concerning it, one point he never clearly grasped. It was not a point of indispensable importance. Not seeing it did not make him any less reliable as a guide for ordinary people; if anything, it made him a little safer, a little less prone to be taken in by humbug or to mistake the hum of the honey-bees for the far-off song of angels. But it did make him fumble a little and grow apprehensive when he came upon something that was inexplicable to him, precisely because he

had not clearly grasped that point and did not realize that it had eluded him. This happened in an incident towards the end of his life which made some stir at the time.

The *Spiritual Letters* of Dom John Chapman were published, posthumously. Goodier was alarmed. He thought he saw a perilous affinity between some of the things that Chapman had written in his letters and some of the propositions of Molinos which had been condemned. He feared that Chapman's words might lead unsuspecting souls astray. These things had been said "off the record", so to speak, and now they were being relayed on the public address system. Anybody might be listening and some might take harm. He felt it his duty to utter a caution and he did so in an article in *The Month* (June 1945).

Dom Roger Huddleston replied in an article in *The Downside Review* for July. This article was reprinted in pamphlet form and widely circulated, and for that reason the Editor of *The Month* felt that it was fitting to allow the Archbishop to print in *The Month* an open letter to Dom Roger. Like the Archbishop the Editor judged that Dom Roger's reply had not been a refutation, and that the cautions Goodier had felt bound to express in the name of Catholic orthodoxy still retained all their force.

It was a relatively small incident, but very illuminating for a study of Goodier himself and his ideas on prayer. For that reason we return to it here.

Archbishop Goodier was very well informed in the matter of spiritual theology. Just before the time of the incident he had given a course of lectures to the theological students at Heythrop College, in the theologate of the English Province of the Society of Jesus. These lectures were published in book form by Burns Oates and Washbourne in 1938, under the title *An Introduction to the Study of Ascetical and Mystical Theology*. A first part of the course was historical and gave evidence not only of wide and systematic reading of Christian writers but also of sympathetic appreciation of the good things to be found outside the Christian tradition. Goodier's years in the East had given him a breadth of outlook that was admirable. It is worth noting that in the early thirties he was writing: "The modern liturgical movement, which endeavours to identify the people with

the priest, to lift the people even to mystical contemplation by making them partakers in the solemn sacrifice, is another illustration of the effort that is being made to unite priest, religious and laity in one." A quarter of a century later these words may sound a trifle platitudinous; we should remember how much has happened in that quarter of a century. Perhaps the most revealing detail in the sentence is the phrase, "even to mystical contemplation".

In summarizing the perennial conflict of views on the question whether mystical prayer is for a chosen few, or open to all who have good will enough to pay the price of it, Goodier showed preference for the second view. He echoed the traditional judgement that few do in fact arrive at it, insisted on the solidly orthodox thesis that no one could reach it without special gifts of grace, but followed the opinion that no one should consider himself debarred from it on the ground that God had not offered him the grace that was needed.

How then did it come about that he was so worried by Abbot Chapman's verbal antics? He knew his reputation for throwing verbal squibs in something of the spirit of a small boy on Guy Fawkes' Day. Why was he so distressed?

We may make some allowance for the fact that he would not have been much amused if a small boy had let off a cracker under his chair, even on Guy Fawkes' Day. He might have smiled with good-natured tolerance of the prank, but he would not have thought it funny. His smile was charming, and a gay chuckle was by no means unusual in him, but it was difficult to imagine him joining in uproarious laughter, and the humour of nonsense did not appeal to him at all. Consequently, all that could be said to explain, or explain away, Chapman's extravagances by his puckish temperament cut very little ice with the serious-minded archbishop.

Yet he had too much tolerance, too much affection for Dom Chapman's memory, to pronounce strictures and warning over something that might be described as fundamentally a matter of style. He did not think that it was a mere matter of style. He was much upset (to quote his own words) by one statement in particular: "Thinking (in prayer) is more disastrous than sleep."

That was only one phrase, but it pin-points the root of

Goodier's difficulty and sets in relief the manner in which he himself was at a bit of a loss concerning contemplative prayer. He had not grasped effectively that there could be (in this life) a state of consciousness of the human spirit which was quite different from "thinking", so different as to be, for some people at least, in this life at least, incompatible with thinking.

He knew very well that no one can attain to supernatural or infused prayer without a gift of grace. Without the help of the Holy Spirit we cannot cry "Abba, Father", nor can we say "Jesus is Lord". We can do no good work of ourselves towards our salvation. He was perfectly clear that without a supernatural elevation the natural powers cannot reach God; what he did not see was that a supernaturally elevated soul may be able to reach God—or at any rate reach mystical prayer—without the use of the ordinary natural powers. This was the point at which there was in him that limitation of which we have spoken.

As far as he could see, a mortal man must be either conscious or unconscious. If he is conscious, he must be thinking. If he is not thinking he must be asleep. In that state he cannot be praying at all. For Abbot Chapman to write—even to an Ursuline nun!—that "thinking impedes it (i.e. contemplative prayer) a great deal, or even stops it entirely" was in Goodier's view most dangerous nonsense.

His strictures on the Abbot's words were based on two assumptions: that beyond the scope or range of "thinking" there was just a void, a sheer non-functioning of the soul in respect of knowing, and that the Abbot was recommending people to jump into that void; and secondly that any and every form of human prayer must contain a substratum of what he and other ordinary human beings meant by "thinking", however rarefied or simplified it might become.

"Prayer without the use of the mind, love without deep thought of the Beloved, except in the single instance when God Himself supplies the object, if it is possible at all, tends to become a self-centred act." So he wrote in *Ascetical and Mystical Theology*. He did not think it possible at all "except in one single instance". It should be noted that he describes that single instance as that in which God Himself "supplies the object".

That is to say he conceived it as being also, like all other forms of prayer, really a matter of "thinking", only in this special instance the mind instead of being conscious of ideas about God, was conscious of God. What he did not see was that this was just what Chapman meant by "not thinking". The "single instance" is in fact not exactly one in which God "supplies the object" (for the object of all prayer is God) but one in which He supplies a means of attaining the object different from what is normally called "thinking".

Perhaps when all is said and done this controversy—like so many others—was really a matter of being at cross-purposes, and of not using words with precisely the same meaning for both sides. In the heat of it Goodier saw dangerous resemblances between Chapman's phrases and the propositions of Molinos. He did not see that Molinos was rapped on the knuckles not entirely for the positive content of his assertions, but partly for the arrogance with which he said that if anyone did not pray in his way he was simply not praying at all. Much less did it occur to the humble archbishop in his holy zeal that this was uncomfortably similar to what he was doing himself. He was in fact saying that if people prayed in the way Abbot Chapman recommended, which sounded to him like nonsense, they could not be praying at all.

Are we to conclude from this that Goodier himself was a stranger to contemplation, and had no first-hand experiential knowledge of mystical prayer? Far from it. It may be true that certain people only reach a strictly mystical experience when their minds have been emptied of all that in ordinary human parlance is called thinking. But this is not the same thing as saying that that is the only way in which anyone can reach such supernatural awareness. St John of the Cross is the guide for those who have to empty their minds before the supernatural light comes in. St Teresa is an outstanding example of those for whom the two lights, natural and supernatural, blend together. When Goodier touches on this point, he writes with enthusiasm about St Teresa. There was somebody he understood, somebody who saw things as he saw them, and prayed as he prayed. And there is no reason for us to doubt that he was privileged to drink of the same water as she drank.

We have recalled the controversy—if such it should be named—over Chapman's *Letters* because it throws light on Archbishop Goodier's ideas concerning prayer. It might be more accurate to say that the light falls rather on his practice than on his theory. In theory he acknowledged the truth that Chapman was trying to convey to his correspondents; it was the way Chapman put it which bothered him; he moved himself more happily on heights where it was not so difficult for the mind to breathe. But it would be a pity to let the recollection of what was almost Goodier's only controversy create the impression that he was a man of controversy. In fact he was the reverse.

In 1933 Messrs Longmans, Green & Co. published a book by him entitled *The Inner Life of the Catholic*. He wrote a preface. The courtly aloofness of it, the dignified "third person" in which he wrote about himself, is very characteristic. The author of the book, he wrote,

sincerely believes in and loves his Church, to which he is no convert, but which has come down to him from the days when every soul in England was Catholic. He thanks God every day for the gift of the faith which came to him as an infant; and he regrets nothing more than that so many of his fellow countrymen have lost this inheritance which once belonged to their forefathers. He knows that many, perhaps most, of his readers do not share that faith and love, do not regret that the inheritance has passed from them. Still, not on that account does he condemn them, or even feel altogether estranged.

Even more revealing, perhaps, is a sentence that follows:

In the same way, and he hopes in the same spirit, the writer has had and still has many friends, Protestant and pagan, Mohammedan, Hindu and Parsee, and he has seen for himself the wonderful working of the grace of God among them all. Many a time he has reminded himself, with the evidence of facts before him, that Jesus Christ our Lord came into this world "not to judge the world but that the world may be saved by Him"; and that He died not for Catholics only, not even for Christians only, but for all men whoever and whatever they might be.

The ecumenical spirit, eirenic, conciliatory which is so

happily in evidence today, was the spirit of Goodier. Thirty years and more ago he was writing in this strain: "The author writes at variance with no one, but only in the hope that what he writes may bring men closer together."

Such a desire might well be his epitaph. Gracious, courteous delicate and sensitive, he was above all a man of charity, a true Christian.

LEONARD BOASE, S.J.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

THE SUPERIOR BLESSEDNESS OF THE SINGLE LIFE

Fr Simplex is criticized by his colleagues for preaching that "the single life as such (i.e. even when undedicated by vow) is better than the married life, and therefore *Miss* is a more honourable title than *Mrs*". He claims that this is the clear meaning of I Cor. vii, in which St Paul, while admitting that everyone has his own gift from God and that it is good to marry, argues that it is better and more blessed to remain unmarried, because the unmarried are more solicitous for the things of the Lord, how they may please God, than for the things of the world, more disposed to think on the things of the Lord than on the things of the world, better able to attend upon the Lord without impediment. Since there is no implication here that the single state is better only when it is confirmed by a vow, or coupled with a special dedication to the service of the Church, does it not appear that Fr Simplex, who is careful always to distinguish between the single life and those who lead it, is right in his contention? (S. J. J.)

REPLY

A profound truth which St Paul sought gropingly to get across to the Corinthians in some forty verses of his letter, a truth which the Fathers expounded in lengthy treatises, and to the clarification of which Pope Pius XII devoted a whole en-

cyclical, this truth Fr Simplex ventures to summarize in a sentence and to clinch in a catch-phrase. In so doing, he invites criticism and can hardly complain when it proves adverse, for his over-simplification results in a travesty of the truth. It is not and never has been the doctrine of the Church that the single life as such, irrespective of the motive from which it is chosen or accepted, is better or more honourable than married life. True, one can deduce from the Pauline text that the single state, inasmuch as it precludes one of the most common causes of distraction from the things of God, is, in this respect, more conducive to the pursuit of spiritual perfection, and therefore that, when it is voluntarily and firmly embraced with this intention, it is preferable to the married state; but the purity and firmness of the motive is clearly the cardinal and operative factor in making it preferable. A celibacy grudgingly accepted at the hand of fate, or adopted for selfish reasons, far from conducting of itself to perfection, is more likely than an honest marriage to prove a handicap, by concentrating on self the attention which perfection requires to be concentrated on God and, through Him, on one's neighbour.

In recent years the laudable desire to promote a greater appreciation of the sacramental dignity of Christian marriage in a materialist world has led some to depreciate the intrinsic value and even practicability of Christian virginity and celibacy, and it was primarily to correct these deviations from orthodoxy that Pope Pius XII issued, 25 March 1954, his encyclical *Sacra Virginitas*.¹ But, in the opening words, "*Sacra virginitas et perfecta illa castitas, quae divino est consecrata famulatu*", and indeed in the whole of the first of the three sections, he was careful to stress again and again that the state of life which the Church extols as superior is not the single state as such, but the single state as "dedicated", "offered to God", "consecrated", whether by religious profession, sacred ordination, or "private promise or vow". Commenting on our Lord's counsel to those who "can take it", to make themselves "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven",² he observes:

¹ A.A.S., XLVI, 1954, pp. 161-91: English version in *Catholic Documents*, XV, pp. 24-43.

² Matth. xix, 12.

Here also it must be added, as the Fathers and Doctors of the Church have clearly taught, that virginity is not a Christian virtue unless we embrace it "for the kingdom of heaven"; that is, unless we take up this way of life precisely to be able to devote ourselves more freely to divine things, to reach heaven more surely, and the more ably and more readily to lead others to the kingdom of heaven. Those, therefore, who do not marry because of exaggerated self-interest, or because, as Augustine says,¹ they shun the burdens of marriage, or because, like Pharisees, they proudly flaunt their physical integrity—an attitude which has been condemned by the Council of Gangra, lest men and women renounce marriage as though it were something despicable instead of because virginity is something beautiful and holy—none of these can claim for themselves the honour of Christian virginity. . . .

This, then, is the primary purpose, this the central idea of Christian virginity: to aim only at the divine, to turn thereto the whole mind and soul; to want to please God in everything, to think of Him continually, to consecrate body and soul completely to Him. This is the way the Fathers of the Church have always understood the words of Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles; for from the earliest days of the Church they have considered virginity a consecration of body and soul offered to God. Thus St Cyprian demands of virgins that 'once they have dedicated themselves to Christ by renouncing the pleasures of the flesh, they have vowed themselves body and soul to God . . . and should seek to adorn themselves only for their Lord and please only Him'.² And the Bishop of Hippo, going further, says, "Virginity is not honoured because it is bodily integrity, but because it is something dedicated to God. . . . Nor do we extol virgins because they are virgins, but because they are virgins dedicated to God in loving continence".³

It is therefore a misleading simplification of the teaching of St Paul to conclude from it that "*Miss* is a more honourable title than *Mrs*". Even leaving out of count the particular vocation which every woman receives from God and which, for most, is to the married state, and abstracting from the sub-

¹ *De sancta virginitate*, c. 22: P.L., XL, 407.

² *De habitu virginum*, 4: P.L., IV, 443.

³ *De sancta virginitate*, cc. 8, 11: P.L., XL, 400, 401. *Catholic Documents*, XV, p. 26.

jective perfection with which that vocation is pursued, one cannot attribute greater honour to a *Miss* merely because she has not become a *Mrs.* One needs first to be assured that she owes her title to the fact that she is "dedicated to God in loving continence". Nor can any argument to the contrary be derived from the lawfulness of the vow not to marry, taken in conjunction with the accepted principle that "the matter of a vow must be not only good, but better than its opposite",¹ because it is clear from the above that abstention from matrimony is better than its opposite, and therefore lawful matter of a vow, only when it is chosen as a means of dedicating one's life more fully to the service of God.

Finally, it is perhaps worth emphasizing that Pope Pius XII, while condemning the glorification of the married state at the expense of the state of consecrated virginity or celibacy, paid tribute to the true dignity and value of Christian marriage with a zeal and constancy unequalled by any of his predecessors. It is significant that a recent thesis on his teaching about marriage as a road to perfection draws its material from no less than 221 documents from his pen, including seventy-five addresses to newly weds.²

L. L. McR.

THE TAKING OF OATHS

Given the Lord's clear condemnation of oath-taking (Matt. v, 34), is it not wrong for Christians to swear oaths, or at least always lawful for them to refuse to swear them? (P. H.)

REPLY

Like the Rabbis of His time, Christ made frequent use of the terse, pithy sayings which we call "aphorisms". The Gospel pages are full of them: "If your right eye scandalizes you pluck

¹ Genicot, *Inst. T. M.*, I, n 316; cf. also canon 1307 § 1.

² *The Supernatural Perfection of Conjugal Life according to Pope Pius XII*, by T. J. Murphy, St Mary of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, Illinois.

it out", "Call no man father", "Do not be solicitous over tomorrow", "One is good", "Whoever is not with me is against me", "Whoever is not against you is with you", etc. It would be foolish to interpret these in as literal-minded a manner as one would interpret a law or a principle of moral theology. An aphorism makes its point by its pungency, and the more it gains in pungency the more it loses in universality. "Too many cooks spoil the broth" is an aphorism; but so also is "Many hands make light work". To say that one contradicts the other is to misunderstand both.

In the text under discussion Christ is expressly attacking literal-mindedness. The letter of the Law forbade the breaking of oaths. It was possible to interpret this only of oaths taken on the name of God. Other promises which avoided the name of God and substituted words like "Heaven" or "the Temple" were not regarded as strict oaths and could be safely broken.

Legalism of that kind cannot be met by replacing the law with another law: "Thou shalt not use any other affirmation but Yes and No"; Christ knew as well as we do that there are circumstances in which a simple Yes or No would be misleading. It can only be met by substituting a completely new *attitude*, and it is this that Christ is proposing throughout the Sermon on the Mount: a spirit of sincerity, charity and trust in God, which (as St Paul is later to say) by-passes law and makes it unnecessary. A world which lives the 100 per cent Christianity outlined in this Sermon will no longer need oaths: a man's Yes will mean Yes without God having to be called to witness. But until that ideal is reached it should cause us no surprise that Church and State continue to demand oaths.

CHURCH REPOSITORIES

Given that the Lord personally banished from the Temple those who bought and sold therein, even though it was the sale of things with which to worship His Father (Matt. xxi, 12), can it ever be lawful to sell newspapers or even objects of piety inside a Christian church? (P. H.)

REPLY

The parallel is unfairly drawn. While it is true that the sale of sheep and other animals was for the purpose of the Passover sacrifice, that the changing of money was for the purpose of the yearly Temple tax, and that these practices could sincerely be said to have God's approval until they were abrogated, it is also true that the scene which met Christ's eyes had gone far beyond the limits required by the situation. The toll exacted by the Jewish priesthood for concessions to stall-holders and approbation of the sacrifice-animals had already introduced a note of commercialization into the business. The inevitable oriental bazaar-haggling between buyer and seller did the rest. By New Testament times the annual feast had turned the sacred Temple area into a vast country fair, and it was this desecration which aroused Christ's anger.

But there are deeper issues at stake than the mere dignity of God's House. The quotations Christ makes on this occasion from Isa. lvi, 3-8 (against the exclusive nationalism that characterized the Judaism of the last centuries B.C.), and from Jer. vii, 1-15 (against the externalism which saw God's Dwelling in a stone building rather than in a pure heart), suggest that it is not merely the bazaar that must go, but everything it stood for: the whole sacrificial system which approached God in ritual rather than in spirit. When St John recounts the scene (ii, 13-22, at the beginning of the Gospel to mark its deep significance), he sees it as a symbol of the way in which the stone Temple must give way to the True Temple for which it had been a preparation: the Risen Body of Christ, Tabernacle of God, which the Christian enters through the Sacraments.

It would be difficult to imagine a Church repository becoming so commercialized that it desecrated the House of God to which it is attached. But if it did, it would fall under the same condemnation of Christ. Even more so if it encouraged the formalism which hides the fact that the Christian's only access to God is through the Risen Body of Christ.

HUBERT J. RICHARDS

FEAST OF OUR LADY "MEDIATRIX GRATIARUM
OMNIUM"

Is it correct that the feast of our Lady *Mediatix Gratiarum Omnium* which has hitherto been observed in some dioceses on 31 May has been suppressed and superseded by the new feast of the Queenship of our Lady on that date? (L. M.)

REPLY

No. Under the old rubrics a diocesan feast like that mentioned, if it was *permanently* impeded by a feast of the Universal Church, was transferred to the first subsequent day free from a feast of nine lessons. The feast of our Lady *Mediatix* was observed as a double of the second class and when the new feast of the Queenship was introduced it was transferred to 1 June.

Under the new rubrics, such a particular diocesan feast of the second class when *perpetually* impeded is transferred to the next day free from a feast of the third class (n. 100), i.e. 1 June.

BLESSING OF A PURIFICATOR

Why is a purificator not blessed? (V. C. P.)

REPLY

Ritus celebrandi, I, 1, directs that the corporal and pall be blessed, and a formula of blessing is given in the *Roman Ritual* (IX, ix, 5). No mention is made of the blessing of a purificator, nor is any form of blessing for this linen provided. It seems to be presumed that the purificator does not come into direct contact with the Precious Blood, yet there is quite a possibility of this whenever a priest is saying two Masses in the same church and leaves the chalice unpurified on the altar after the first Mass.

Then it is prescribed by a rubric of the Missal, given after the first Mass of Christmas Day (a rubric derived from an Instruction of *S.R.C.* of 1858, which is reproduced in the *Roman Ritual* to this day; in the 1952 edition it is given in Tit. V, cap. v), that the celebrant should lay the purificator across the mouth of the unpurified chalice, when it certainly could come into direct contact with the Precious Blood. In addition, the purificator is one of the linens that must be ritually washed by a cleric in major Orders before being laundered (*C.J.C.*, canon 1306²). *S.R.C.* was asked in 1816, "an purificatorium benedici debeat?", to which it replied "Negative" (*S.R.C.*, 2572¹²)—"it need not". While many authors say it is becoming that a purificator be blessed—presumably with the form *benedictio ad omnia*—a diligent search of sources and commentators has failed to provide an answer as to why a purificator is exempt from the obligation of being blessed, in view of the facts that it could come into direct contact with the Precious Blood and should be ritually washed after use. Perhaps some learned reader of *THE CLERGY REVIEW* would kindly provide one.

J. B. O'C.

CORRESPONDENCE

CELEBRANT AT SOLEMN MASS

(*THE CLERGY REVIEW*, March 1961, pp. 174-5)

Mgr Row writes:

The new rubrics (n. 523) give quite clearly the occasions when, at Solemn Mass, the celebrant *may* sit at the bench with his ministers. This rubric then continues, "alio tempore stat ad altare, vel genuflectit, ut supra". Since the time of singing the Epistle is not in the list of occasions when the celebrant may sit, it is clear that the rubrics direct him to stand—and, furthermore, "ad altare" not "ad sedem" as Canon O'Connell prefers for the Gospel. The next rubric (n. 524), which gives the directions for the choir, confirms this by making a distinction between "when the celebrant sits" (section "a") and the singing of the Epistle, gradual, etc. (section "b").

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Missal and the *Additiones et Variationes* (cf. Pope John's *Motu Proprio*) they did not abrogate the *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missae*. It seems to me that we are not entitled to make changes in the rite beyond that which is needed to observe the new rubrics. In the *Ritus servandus* the celebrant is at the Epistle corner when the subdeacon sings the Epistle.

In any case the method suggested by Canon O'Connell leads to complication, and is against the modern trend of simplification. My own experience with a daily High Mass at Westminster Cathedral has been that the easiest way to conform to the new rubrics at this point is to leave the celebrant and deacon in exactly their former places. The celebrant faces the altar listening to the singing of the subdeacon. He blesses the subdeacon after the latter has sung the Epistle and then recites the gradual, etc., from the missal. At a suitable moment, he proceeds to the centre of the altar, and the subdeacon passes behind him with the missal to put it in place for the offertory. The deacon carries the book of Gospels to the altar, and assists the celebrant for the blessing of incense (at the centre). After he has blessed the deacon, the celebrant returns to the Epistle side for the singing of the Gospel. The Mass then continues in the old manner.

Canon O'Connell writes:

In my reply to which Mgr Row takes exception I was careful to use twice the word *seem*, making it quite clear that my reply was not intended to be categorical. I was not unmindful of the silence of n. 523 of the code regarding permission to the sacred ministers to sit at the Epistle, etc., but I had some reason to believe that its silence was not deliberate. The argument from silence can at times, of course, be cogent; at other times it is not. I notice, for example, that in n. 511 of the rubrical code, where there is question of what the celebrant is to say aloud at low Mass, there is no mention in 511 *h* and *i* of the *per omnia saecula*, etc., at the conclusion of the Secret and of the Canon. Are we to conclude that in future these two conclusions are to be said *secreto*? Mention is made of both of them in n. 513*a*, dealing with what the celebrant is to sing at solemn Mass.

Before I put forward the view that the silence of n. 523 might reasonably be interpreted as permitting the celebrant to the sedilia for the Epistle, etc.—for the three reasons that I gave in my reply—two rubrical experts at S.R.C. were consulted, unofficially, of course. The first—who happened to have been the chief architect of the new code of rubrics—gave the opinion quite definitely that it

was permissible, and indeed preferable, for the celebrant to go to the sedilia, and perform his liturgy there. The second cited the silence of n. 523 (as Mgr Row does) but when the alternative was suggested saw nothing against it. I may add that the view I tentatively put forward has the backing of Fr F. R. McManus (Professor of Canon Law at the Catholic University of America and President of the American Liturgical Conference) in *Worship* (Jan., 1961, p. 129), and of Mgr A. G. Martimort, the distinguished French liturgiologist, in *La Maison Dieu* (No. 63 bis, p. 53). He points out that an argument in favour of an oversight in n. 523 is the fact that the new rubric reproduces almost verbally the old rubric of *Rubricae generales* XVII, 6. (I now see that *sequentia* has been added in the new rubric, and as it has been printed with a lower case "s", I wonder could it possibly mean "what follows", and not the Sequence, which I myself took it to mean in my translation? *Transeat!*)

I think one important principle arises from Mgr Row's letter. The code of liturgical law is fully formed, or rather developed, not only by the actual text of the rubrics, but also by reasonable interpretations of the rubrics given by those unhappy clerics who indulge in the gentle art of interpreting liturgical law, and go by the malodorous name of "rubricians" (just as Canon Law or Moral Theology is made up not only of actual laws but also of their reasonable interpretation by commentators deemed to be competent). In this development it seems to me desirable there should be room for opinions making for greater liberty of action when these opinions have a reasonable and reasoned basis.

Regarding Mgr Row's suggestion as to what is best in practice at the Epistle, etc.—and he is a very competent judge on this point—can he give me any reason why the celebrant, if he remains at the Epistle corner for the Epistle, etc., should go to the centre to put incense in and then back again to the corner of the altar? This was naturally done when the celebrant formerly crossed to the Gospel corner to read the Gospel.

I have kept to the last the good wine (for Mgr Row). Since I wrote for THE CLERGY REVIEW I have heard—on good authority but not from Rome—that S.R.C. has given a *private* reply to the effect that the celebrant is to remain at the altar "*donec aliter forte provideatur*". This reply does not in the least surprise me. S.R.C., whatever the views of its consultors—and they are, of course, only consultors—is very sensitive, and understandably, about any unauthorized anticipation of its decisions. I opine that the terms of this private reply do not rule out the possibility of a different view becoming tenable eventually.

THE PARISH AND THE FOOTBALL POOL

(THE CLERGY REVIEW, March 1961, pp. 143-5)

Fr Daley writes:

One notes with regret that, in publishing the article by George C. Norman you have joined the ranks of those who seem to be bent on building up Catholic public opinion against the organizing of Pools as a source of revenue for the parish. One would suggest that this ill becomes a journal whose *raison d'être* would seem to be the assisting of the priest in his work for the Church. Boost Christian Stewardship by all means, but why turn the heat on the Pools? One fears that the Nonconformist conscience has infected some of those who are not separated brethren.

The Editor comments:

Whatever may be said for or against parish football pools, it is, surely, a service to the Church to stimulate reflexion on the subject. Even if parish football pools must be accepted as necessary—the views of a contributor should not be immediately identified with those of the Editor—it is distressing that a practice which has considerable repercussions on the attitude of Catholics, the work of priests and the impact of the Church on non-Catholics should be adopted for reasons of expediency without any deep reflexion on its implications.

MAYNOOTH UNION SUMMER SCHOOL 1961

The Maynooth Union will hold its fourth Summer School at Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, from Monday 26 to Thursday 29 June 1961.

The theme is "Christian Unity". Bishop Wright of Pittsburg will describe the Catholic Church's attitude to ecumenism, Canon Hamell of Maynooth will lecture on the Ecumenical movement outside the Catholic Church and Fr McNamara of Maynooth will speak on the theological foundation of the Church unity movement. The programme includes papers on the three main bodies of separated Christians: Mgr Joseph Hoefer, member of the Secretariate for Re-Union, on Protestantism; Fr Francis Clark, s.j., of Heythrop, on Anglicanism; and Fr Pól Ó Súilleabháin, O.F.M., University College, Galway, on the Eastern Churches.

Further papers will deal with particular problems: Fr Bernard Leeming, s.j., of Heythrop, will speak on "The Roman Primacy";

Mgr Hoefler on "The Word of God"; Fr Francis Clark, S.J., on "The Mass"; and Fr Enda McDonagh of Maynooth, on "Religious Freedom". A Symposium on "Catholic-Protestant Relations in Ireland" will be introduced by Mgr Arthur Ryan, Belfast.

Applications should be made to The Secretary, Maynooth Union Summer School, Maynooth.

THE EASTER VIGIL

(THE CLERGY REVIEW, March 1961, pp. 129-42)

Fr J. Owen O'Reilly writes:

Our thanks are due to Canon Burrett for his practical article. One wonders, however, if the reason why the Vigil got shunted into a liturgical siding at an early date was not simply that it is structurally a bad bit of pastoral liturgy. We were taught that a sermon, to be effective, should make only one or two points, and make them clearly and simply. A beginner's mistake is to try to get everything in—then nothing stands out, and the hearer is bored and confused.

The Vigil is really five distinct ceremonies which have never been made a coherent whole. The result is a most un-Roman repetitiveness. We are never sure what the mood is: purple—white—purple—white ("Why is the priest wearing two stoles, Mummy?"). There are fifteen Dominus Vobiscums, three Prefaces with their introductory dialogues, a series of lessons separate from the fore-mass, ten separate incensations; candles lit, blown out, and lit again (and blown out again); we bless the fire, the incense grains, the paschal candle, the baptismal water, the people; we sing the Litany of Saints, split in half for no apparent reason, and, at the end of the Mass, sing a canticle of great length, with no obvious Easter connexions.

Is it any wonder that the average back-bencher Catholic is unenthusiastic? I would suggest a simple ceremony as follows: The paschal candle, ready-marked and grained and in its paschal candle-stick on the sanctuary, is lit by a taper whilst the couplet "Lumen Christi gloriose etc." is said by all. The light is passed to the people, who all have a small candle ready. The baptismal water, already in position, is blessed by the ceremonies used at present, starting at "Halat ter . . . in modum crucis", omitting everything before, and the people immediately renew their baptismal vows: Mass then begins with the *Kyrie*, and is as at present, except that an extra lesson, telling of the first Passover, is inserted before the Epistle (taken from Exodus xii), and instead of Lauds a suitable Easter hymn is sung.

BOOK REVIEWS

LITURGY

Liturgy and Doctrine. By Charles Davis, 100 pp. (Sheed and Ward, 1960. 4s. 6d.)

ONE of the signal benefits that Dom Lambert Beauduin, the father of the modern liturgical movement (the foundation stone of which was laid by St Pius X), conferred on it was to set forth the doctrinal basis of the movement. He was not only an enthusiastic liturgist but also a distinguished theologian (he was a pupil of Abbot Marmion and a professor of theology at Mont César Abbey, Belgium, and at the international Benedictine College of St Anselmo in Rome), and in a modest booklet, called by the significant name *La Piété de l'Eglise*, he outlined the theological foundations of the liturgical movement. This book has become famous. In an equally modest-looking brochure, which belies the great value of every page of its contents, Fr Davis, also a theologian (he is professor of dogmatic theology at St Edmund's College), has done a like service, in keeping with the advance the liturgical movement has made since 1914, for English speaking readers of today.

Starting from the principle that "the liturgy is the centre of the pastoral work of the Church" he outlines the development of the liturgical movement, remotely from Abbot Guéranger, definitely and decisively from Dom Beauduin, followed by the work of the Abbey of Maria Laach (with the theological pioneer work of Dom Odo Casel) and the well-informed *vulgarization* of the French school of liturgists. Briefly but clearly and convincingly Fr Davis treats of the character of the liturgical movement, the connexion between Christ's Resurrection and the Liturgy, the history of salvation, the Church as the great worshipper in and with her Founder, Liturgy and Mystery (a chapter in which a brief but clear account of Dom Casel's "mystery theology" is outlined), sacrifice and sacraments, and the relation between the Liturgy and eschatology.

All this makes stiff reading, as it deals with very profound, fundamental theological ideas and principles, but it is very necessary as it is very valuable reading for all those who wish to understand what the liturgical movement is all about. It is well that a theologian rather than a liturgist should have written this excellent booklet, otherwise it might carry less weight as the work of a "liturgical fanatic". Thus were dubbed fifty years ago the pioneers of the liturgical movement. There are many who still do not under-

stand this movement. Here is what Fr Davis has to say about them (p. 98):

There are those who view the liturgical movement, whether with favour or disfavour, as simply an agitation for ritual changes. . . . Certainly if anyone denies the need for a reform of the liturgy, he may be in invincible ignorance, but he is definitely out of touch with the mind of the Church. The movement for liturgical reform has been taken over by the authorities of the Church, and taken over in no uncertain fashion. . . . Let no one, then, underestimate the significance and power of the liturgical movement. What is taking place is not the increasing popularity of a private hobby or interesting sideline, not a touching-up of ritual anomalies, but a change, a renewal in the pastoral work of the Church, and the concern is not with incidentals, but with the fundamentals of doctrine (p. 99).

And it is with these fundamentals that this important and precious booklet deals, with "the doctrinal basis of the liturgical movement". May it have a multitude of readers. It cannot fail to give light and do good.

Introductio in Liturgiam Occidentalem. By Herman A. P. Schmidt, S.J.
xi + 849 pp. (Herder, 1960. 70s.)

THE liturgical movement is now so complicated and so widespread that there is an urgent need for attention to and a study of the Sacred Liturgy, in which so many of the elements of the Church's life, and not merely the cultural elements, meet—dogma and asceticism, canon law, moral and pastoral theology, history and art.

This newest book is by the distinguished Dutch professor of S. Liturgy in the Gregorian University, Rome, and is graced by a preface of Cardinal Lercano, Archbishop of Bologna, that doughty champion of the liturgical movement.

If anyone is naive enough these days to think that the study of the Liturgy is a simple matter he had better first look over the titles of the twenty-seven chapters of this book and he will alter his ideas. And the author of this book of 849 pages entitles it an "Introduction" to Liturgy, and to the Liturgy of the Western Church alone. As one reads through this immense amount of well-informed, thoughtful and deeply interesting matter the memory of Goldsmith's village schoolmaster returns: "And still the wonder grew, that one small head could carry all he knew."

The aim of this book, the author tells us (p. 3), is pastoral, "ut

ex intelligentia liturgiae oriatur efficax actio liturgica secundum desideria Ecclesiae." The treatment of the subject is general rather than specialistic—it is an introduction even if long and deep—but it is anything except superficial. It is so thorough that, for example, Father Schmidt devotes twelve pages to a study of the word *liturgia* and discusses thirty definitions of the science of Liturgy. He covers every department of the Liturgy: the Mass, the divine Office, the sacraments, the calendar, sacred music, sacred art and all the rest. He deals faithfully with such living and sometimes controversial topics as the liturgical movement in our day—its merits and occasional demerits, perhaps—the use of modern languages in worship, concelebration, sacred art and other thorny problems, and gives his own well discussed and ably defended view on each. No question, theoretical or practical, which is of interest to students of the Liturgy has escaped Father Schmidt's attention.

His doctrine is essentially sound, it embodies the knowledge and views of an experienced and learned liturgist and teacher and is based primarily on the official teaching of the Church; it is abundantly documented. Of special interest are the sections dealing with the baptismal rite (pp. 238, *sqq.*) and an historical synopsis of the Mass liturgy (pp. 350, *sqq.*). Nearly every chapter has appended to it a selected bibliography which will be of great value to students of the Liturgy. Not content with this there is at the end of the book a copious selected general bibliography (pp. 742, *sqq.*), and five indices making reference—so important a feature of a book like this—delightfully easy, a boon not always given even in standard works.

No serious student of matters liturgical can afford to neglect a close study of this remarkable and most welcome book.

Fashions in Church Furnishings, 1840-1940. By Peter F. Anson. 383 pp. (The Faith Press, 1960. 50s.)

As one would expect from the facile and practiced pen of Mr Peter Anson this latest book of his is one of great interest and much instruction for anyone interested in church furnishings. His encyclopaedical knowledge of architects, artists and craftsmen and their work in the churches of the British Isles and of the United States of America is quite amazing.

He chose a very interesting period in which to study church interiors when so many Protestants of the Anglo-Catholic variety were aping Catholic ways—often the very worst ways, liturgically considered—and Catholic architects and artists, with few exceptions, neither knew nor cared about the liturgical law that concerns their work in church building, decoration and furnishing.

Mr Anson's account of such famous people as Pugin, George Gilbert Scott, Bentley, Comper and others, and their influence on church furnishings, is quite fascinating.

Fashions in church construction and furnishing during the century 1840-1940 were as varied and sometimes as whimsical as those in house furnishing or women's dress, and Mr Anson, with a nice sense of humour, includes in his many inimitable sketches of church interiors, specimens of the dress of the devotees, men and women, of the different periods of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The main feature of the interior of churches in the Victorian era was their over-decoration—often garish, and of which sham was no small part. Many churches were crammed with ecclesiastical bric-à-brac, some of it doubtless of real value, much of it just "junk". Many of the architects and artists of the period—there were, of course, notable exceptions—had not yet learned the value of truth, simplicity, austerity and dignity in the equipment of churches. As for the Catholic ones, their bold disregard of the rubrics—if they had even a bowing acquaintance with them at all—was notorious. The fundamental idea that an altar is a place of sacrifice and not a mere pedestal for huge crocketed and pinnacled reredoses, and that it is the focal point of the entire building on which all else should converge, was largely ignored. Altars were frequently constructed as settings for an elaborate, fixed throne for exposition—which in relation to the Mass is a subsidiary, and only occasional, function—in which the altar cross, often diminutive, was placed (and this is forbidden), with an unveilable tabernacle embedded in a gradine, despite the fact that the law requiring the use of a conopaeum is at least as old as the first official edition of the Roman Ritual (1614). Those responsible for church planning hadn't yet discovered, it would seem, that if an altar is to be consecrated it should be detached from the wall and have natural stone supports near the ends of the table; that the high altar, at least, should be honoured by some form of canopy, however simple, and should be clotheable as the symbol of Christ. They seemed to think that gradines were an indispensable part of an altar—perhaps they were as shelves for innumerable brass vases in those days.

Mr Anson's account of what was considered "Romish" at one period in church furnishings—and it is incredible to learn that even the famous gradines and a simple credence came into this category—to be eschewed by sturdy Evangelical Protestants, or eagerly adopted by High Church votaries, is very amusing.

Fashions in Church Furnishings is a highly entertaining book,

packed with valuable items of information and instruction. One defect there is: the author has given us an excellent bibliography and an index of places and persons but no index of subjects. Was this omission due to his modesty, believing his book to be one that will be read through once and never consulted—if so, he is mistaken—or was it due just to the boredom of compiling a good index?

The Christian Calendar. By Noële M. Denis-Boulet. 125 pp. (Burns & Oates, 1960. 8s. 6d.)

THIS slim volume is indeed worthy of its place in the famous *Je Sais—Je Crois* (Faith and Fact) series. It is a translation, competently made, by P. J. Hepburne-Scott of volume 112, *Le Calendrier Chrétien*, of this series.

The authoress, a graduate of the University of Paris and the Institut Catholique, is a philosopher and an archaeologist, as well as a student of the Liturgy.

In a small space Madame Noële Denis-Boulet gives an excellent study of the development of the Christian calendar. She gives a clear summary of modern views on the origin of the chief feasts of the Church's year and shows throughout the book that she is well abreast of modern scholarship in her subject. The book is clearly written, with the simplicity that is the fruit of real learning, and is of much interest.

It is a pity that it has no index, as this small volume is well worthy of being consulted from time to time. The absence of an index makes this difficult.

La Liturgia Delle Ore. By Vincenzo Raffa. 357 pp. (Morcelliana, 1959. 900 lire.)

THIS very good book had the ill-luck to appear not long before the new codex of the rubrics of the Roman Breviary, but happily this does not in any way detract from its value as it is only incidentally concerned with the rubrics of the Divine Office.

Although it is not a big book it is quite a complete treatise on the Office. Part I deals with the psychological and supernatural value of prayer in general, and of liturgical prayer in particular, and the real meaning of the latter. Part II treats excellently of the history of the origin and development of the Office. Part III is concerned with the structural elements of the Office: psalms, lessons, hymns and prayers; while Part IV considers the nature and structure of each of the canonical Hours. The last part (Part V) deals with the ascetical and pastoral value of the Divine Office and has a concluding

chapter, of special interest at the moment, on the Breviary and the laity.

At this time when the new rubrics have just come into operation—and Fr Raffa's story of the Office will explain many of their new elements—and further reform of the Office is very probable after the coming Ecumenical Council, this book, excellently written, is of special interest and service. Its author is widely read—his bibliography of both classical and modern books on the Breviary is proof of this—and one great value of his book is that he has consulted original sources and drawn his own conclusions. The book is nicely finished by a useful lexicon of terms used in the Divine Office

J. B. O'C.

CATECHETICS

The Explanatory Catechism of Christian Doctrine. New edition 1959. (Burns & Oates. 6d.)

Modern catechisms—and by the fact, elementary religious instruction and preaching which are under their influence—are not in line with the great kerygmatic tradition . . . which takes the saving action of God as the starting-point and centre of religious teaching. The fundamental starting-point (of modern catechisms) is always man and what he has to do. . . . The result has been a general deviation in the structure and method of modern religious teaching . . . so much so that Christianity could appear to be more an assemblage of doctrines, commandments and rites rather than the Good News of the Kingdom of God and its coming.

In recent years, the various countries have been seen passing one after the other from the usual catechism by answers and definitions to a catechism conceived in the form of lesson-chapters and directed towards the simultaneous use of the historical method and the systematic one. . . . The link between history, doctrine, liturgy and life constitute such a remarkable progress that many countries, even outside Europe, have acknowledged the superiority of this method.

THESE two quotations from Professor F. X. Arnold of Tübingen (see *Serviteurs de la Foi*, Desclée) are a fair basic comment on our catechism, which is here presented in a re-edited explanatory context. The experimental catechism circulated recently for criticism will be, let us hope, along with the careful scrutiny and suggestions that came from many quarters, the starting-point of a catechism or series of catechisms, and a catechetical outlook

equal to that of our continental brethren. Meanwhile this reprint has a practical purpose to serve. In schools a paper-back edition soon wilts under use, but the modest price of this one should make replacement easy.

Shaping the Christian Message: Essays in Religious Education. Edited by Gerard S. Sloyan. xi + 327 pp. (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1958. \$5.50)

ANYONE who desires to gain a first acquaintance with the spirit which animates the new catechetical movement will be well rewarded if he studies this compendium of essays contributed by men of experience on both sides of the Atlantic.

Five historical chapters help us to realize that the best recent thought on teaching the faith rejoins a healthy tradition that had declined by the end of the Middle Ages. Fr Sloyan studies the history of catechetics till the Middle Ages. This account perhaps takes in too much; but certainly this is a very complete and well-documented survey for anyone who wishes to pursue the subject further.

Fr Joseph Jungmann's study of mediaeval times contains a profound lesson. He gives an overall picture of Christendom as a world imbued with the Christian spirit in every detail, and then he points out its weaknesses: "What the young person assimilated from his environment was in no way the pure expression of revealed teaching. It was in many ways a remarkable conglomeration of truth and fiction. . . ." "Even in the use of the Church's chief means of grace, the people's piety tended to be too much on the periphery of things." And all for want of solid instruction.

Fr J. D. Crichton must have lived long with his subject to give us such a careful and easy account as he does of "Religious Education in England in the Penal Days". He shows how a faith compromised by outward conformity was saved from extinction by the Douay and Jesuit missionary priests, who laid in the hearts of thousands a faith "solidly instructed, deeply pious and very manly". He tells us of the volume of publications that was somehow maintained from 1565 onwards: Vaux's *Catechisme*, for instance, or Fr Persons's *Christian Directory*, and especially the vast written work of Richard Challoner, a great pastoral bishop and "before all else a catechist".

Fr Colomb's account of the once well-known but now outdated *Méthode de St-Sulpice* has much less appeal. The writer, himself a Sulpician, is the leading exponent in France of the new approach to religion teaching based on Scripture and the Liturgy and the use of the best of modern methods. A contribution on these lines would have served better the purpose of this book.

A broad survey of recent trends is, however, provided by Fr Ranwez, S.J., and the next four essays deal with the principles of religious teaching method and with syllabus-planning, although this planning, strangely enough, is not concerned with anything below undergraduate level. Fr Coudreau analyses remarkably well the character of true catechizing. "The catechist should teach in such a way that doctrine is received in the one catechized at the level of faith, awakens in him a living faith and arouses in him the life of faith." He distinguishes between the theologian's procedure and that of the catechist, analyses the movement of the soul to which some aspect of the mystery of God come to us in Christ is correctly presented, and draws some conclusions. The essay repays close study.

Canon A. Boyer, in a complementary essay on early religious education, urges the need of understanding the child in his ontological reality, in his psychological development and in his relation to his environment. He stresses the impressionability of early years and then makes interesting observations on the development of the child up to the age of seven. The essay contains too much of the specialist's jargon to read easily.

Over in the "States", the "kerygmatic" approach in theology is helping to think out the type of sacred-doctrine course in college. Fr Gustave Weigel, S.J., discusses, with some penetrating remarks, the link between such a divinity course and the faculty of theology. He re-examines the place of apologetics in the college course, urges that it should have an intensely ecclesiological preoccupation, and that it should be active.

Fr John A. Hardon, S.J., in his turn, studies the main elements of the current transformation of college religion teaching. He dwells on the renewed interest in St Thomas Aquinas and in the recent re-emphasis in the Church on the doctrine of the Mystical Body, the principles of Catholic Action, and lay participation in the Liturgy. "Each of these is having a marked influence on the direction in which college religious instruction is going in the United States."

The final section of this symposium presents practical realizations and considerations in the field of religious education. Fr Hofinger, S.J., discusses the training in the United States of catechists of those children who are not in Catholic schools, and develops his thesis further with regard to school religion teachers (Sisters and Brothers). The basic need is a course of doctrine which conveys the true meaning of the Christian message, and in which the accent is laid "on the positive presentation of religion teaching, not on theological proof, and most definitely not on any defence against legions

of adversaries, old or new". The second need is a course in method which deals with religious instruction and religious training as a unit. Real importance attaches to a course in Holy Scripture, in Liturgy and in Church History. Fr Hofinger deals finally with the deficiencies in the catechetical training of priests in the United States. His whole chapter is relevant to needs in this country.

Fr J. J. Maguire details the present state of "Newman work" in the United States, a largely grass-roots apostolate carried on through Newman clubs and their chaplains on behalf of Catholic students attending non-Catholic colleges and universities.

Canon Drinkwater's essay on "The Use of Words: A Problem both of Content and Method" is a matter of whether a speaker is at one or not with the realities he expresses. If he is, then, in Wordsworth's phrase: "truth will be carried alive into the heart of the listener". Language after all is a symbol, a communing medium between persons, and when that is applied to the Word of God in catechism, the implications go very far. Language at its most genuine will be found to be the "poetic-simple" language of everyday life. We fall back on "explanations" and opaque abstractions about dogmas when we have not long enough seen into them nor lived their vital meaning. And that, somehow, confirms the argument for "kerygmatic" teaching and surrender to it in faith.

The final chapter is that of Fr Delcuve, s.j. He examines the importance to religious education of early Confirmation. From a study of the New Testament, of the Liturgy of the Sacrament in the context of the primitive paschal vigil, the practice of the Church over the ages, and acts of the magisterium, he passes to a theological reflection on the specific character of Confirmation. He concludes that "Confirmation at the age of reason—if not sooner" is a necessity for the normal efficacy of religious formation.

All in all, this is a most helpful book.

BROTHER ALFRED, F.S.C.

SHORT NOTICES

The Rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal. The General Decree Novum rubricarum of S.C.R. 26 July 1960, with an English translation by J. B. O'Connell. x + 206 pp. (Burns & Oates. Price not stated.)

TRANSLATOR and publisher are to be congratulated for the speed with which they have produced this full text of the new Codex with Latin and English on opposite pages, tables of liturgical days, notes

on the new calendar, and a comprehensive index. Dare we now look forward to the translator's full commentary on the Codex?

The Worship of the Church. A Companion to Liturgical Studies. By William J. O'Shea, s.s., D.D. x + 582 pp. (Darton, Longman & Todd. 28s.)

THIS is a revised edition of a work first published by The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland, in 1957, and reviewed here in January 1958 (pp. 49-50). A few changes have been made to bring the book up to date, but these do not include the changes made by the new Codex. The bibliography, too, has been augmented. A useful feature is the considerable reduction in price, 28s. as against \$7.00, or £2 12s. 6d.

H. E. W.

Family and Social Action. 51 pp. (New Life Publications. 2s. 6d.)

A HANDBOOK for the Family and Social Action movement. This had its origins in the Young Christian Workers and is a similar organization for adults. It has local groups of different kinds, the principal type being the family group arranged on a neighbourhood basis. The booklet gives full details about the movement and outlines for thirteen meetings. It is intended primarily for the family groups. A reading of it shows that the movement would create a strong sense of community and a new apostolic zeal among Catholics.

Livres catholiques 1955-1958. 159 pp. (Syndicat des Editeurs, Paris. Distributed by P. Lethielleux, Paris. 6 NF.)

THE third and latest of the collective catalogues of Catholic books prepared by a group of a hundred and thirty French publishers. The books are listed according to subjects, but the catalogue gives title and author tables. The two previous catalogues cover the period from 1945 to 1955, and the next one will finish at the end of 1961. A very useful aid.

Enjoying the New Testament. By Margaret T. Monro. With a foreword by the Rev. Cuthbert Lattey, s.J. vii + 214 pp. (Longmans. 10s. 6d.)

A NEW edition as a paperback of a book that has done excellent service since 1945 in introducing people to the New Testament. Some points could well have been altered; for example, the attribution of Hebrews to St Paul. The failure to rise to the level of Johannine thought is more noticeable today after the studies of

recent years. The stress on historical detail and chronology rather than on doctrine belongs to an earlier fashion. But when all this has been said, it remains true that the book succeeds remarkably in helping the uninitiated to make contact with the New Testament for themselves. Its reappearance is most welcome.

C. D.

Letter to a Parish Priest. By Pamela Frankau. 4 pp. (Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 2 Carthusian Street, E.C.1. Pamphlet No. 2. 3d.)

THE answers to the moral problems raised by the mere existence of nuclear weapons are not so clear as to preclude differences of opinion even among Catholics. This pamphlet is the *cri de cœur* of a member of a Catholic group who cannot reconcile nuclear warfare with their consciences and want the Church to come out openly on their side. In view of the complexity of the problem and the division of honest opinion, one may doubt whether their demand is reasonable, but one cannot read this emotional statement of their case without sympathizing with their anguish and understanding their emotion. Those who are less sure of the intrinsic immorality of all nuclear warfare are not so happy about it either.

L. L. McR.

Pray the Mass. By John T. McMahon. 65 pp. (Macmillan. 2s.)

THIS booklet originates in the diocese of Perth (Australia) where Mgr McMahon is a well-known writer on teaching religion. It is described as "a textbook on the Mass", for children from six to twelve; this is an oddly chosen age-group, and even for the older ones in it the book seems too cluttered with needless or premature details (a minor instance of this is numerous Greek and Latin derivations). The Mass-ceremonies are described prayerfully enough in thirty-two "steps"; there are echoes and borrowings from various sources, such as the Sower booklet *Short Instructions on the Mass* and (with due acknowledgement) Fr Roche's *A Child's Prayers to Jesus*. The photographs of the Mass are too small to be very helpful.

F. M.

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